ESSAYS

ON VARIOUS

SUBJECTS.

By the AUTHOR of

REFLECTIONS

ON THE

SEVEN DAYS of the WEEK.

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOL I.

LONDON,

Printed for JOHN and FRANCIS RIVINGTON
(N° 62) St. Paul's Church-Yard.

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ESSAY I.

ONE ſcarce ever walked, with any Set of Company, by a neat Cottage, but ſomebody or other has expreſſed their Envy of the paſtoral Inhabitant. It is quite common, among People of eaſy and affluent Circumſtances, to imagine in a ſplenetic Moment, every laborious Situation happier than their own: and to wiſh an exchange with the Plough-man, the Shepherd, or the Mechanic. I have ſometimes thought this an Affectation: and a very falſe Sentiment it ſurely is. For if all made the Improvement, they ought of their own Way of Life, there can be little Doubt, but the higher, and more leiſura-

ble Stations would be, upon the whole, the happieſt. That they rarely prove ſo in Fact, is the Fault of the Poſſeſſors: Who unable to avoid their neceſſary Cares, and uninduſtrious to ſeek out their true Advantages, ſink under a Weight, that they might eaſily balance, ſo as not to feel it.

What is generally called the Spleen, is no other than the uneaſy Conſciouſneſs and Diſſatisfaction of a Mind formed for nobler Purſuits, and better Purpoſes, than it is ever put upon. Mere Pleaſure is an End too unworthy for a rational Being to make its only Aim. Yet Perſons, unconſtrained by Neceſſity, are ſo apt to be allured by Indolence and Amuſement, that their better Faculties are ſeldom exerciſed as they ought to be: Though every Employment that ſerves no other Purpoſe than merely to while away the preſent Moment, gives the Mind a painful Senſation, that whether diſtinctly attended to, or not, makes up, when frequently repeated, the Sum of that Satiety

and

and Tediouſneſs ſo often lamented, in proſperous Life.

There is, doubtleſs, to many Perſons a real Difficulty in making the Choice of an Employment, when they are left perfectly at Liberty, to chuſe what they will. Neceſſity is perhaps the moſt ſatisfactory Guide: and for that Reaſon alone, the Artificer, the Shepherd and the Farmer, are happier than their affluent Neighbours. The poor Man muſt either work or ſtarve: ſo he makes the beſt of his Lot; works cheerfully, and enjoys the Fruit of his honeſt Labour. The Rich, the Eaſy, the Indolent, have a Taſk as neceſſary, but not ſo obvious. There is Room for ſome Doubt, and Uncertainty as to the Way of ſetting about it. A Life of ſublime Speculation is too high for the preſent State: A Life of ſoft Pleaſure is too low. The right Medium is a Life buſied in the Exerciſe of Duty: and Duties there are peculiar to every Situation, and an Enquiry into theſe is the leading one.

I was drawn into this Speculation by having indulged, laſt Summer, a whole Week of Idleneſs in a Viſit, I made to an old Acquaintance in the Country. I, too, took it into my Head one Afternoon, to envy a poor Man, who was hard at Work for his Livelihood, mending the Roof of a Church, where he had ſome Danger, as well as Toil. I, who had been ſeeking out the cooleſt Shade, and reclining on the greeneſt Turf, amid the Fragrance of a thouſand Flowers: I, who had Leiſure to attend to the Warbling of Birds around me, or in Peace and Safety might amuſe myſelf with the livelieſt Wit and Eloquence of *Greece* and *Rome*—would have reſigned all theſe Delights with Joy, to ſit whiſtling at the Top of a high Ladder, ſuffering both Heat and Hunger.

After ruminating much on ſo odd a Phænomenon, I could find no better Way of accounting for it, than from the Preferableneſs of any allotted Employment, to an inactive Indulgence of ſelfiſh Pleaſure.

ſure. It would therefore be worth while for all of us, to conſider what is our allotted Employment, and ſitting down contented with that, all might be more than tolerably happy, and no ſuch great Inequalities in the World, as are uſually complained of.

Not that all Amuſement and Indulgence ſhould be ſeverely baniſhed. When properly and proportionably mixed with the more ſerious Purpoſes of Life, they become a Part of Duty. Reſt and Relaxation are neceſſary to Health: The elegant Arts refine our Imaginations: and the moſt trifling Gaieties ſerve to cheriſh our good Humour and innocent Alacrity of Heart. The Enjoyment of proper Delights fills us with Gratitude to their all-bountiful Diſpenſer, and adds to the Bands of Society a flowery Chain of no ſmall Strength, and does Juſtice to a fair World, that is full of them. The Number of th m varies according to numberleſs Circumſtances: but, in no Circumſtance, are mere

Amuſement and Relaxation to be conſidered as the Buſineſs of Life, or to be ſubſtituted for that real Taſk, which, in ſome Inſtance or other, is allotted to every State.

Let then the Shepherd enjoy his Peace, his Meadows, and his Oaten Pipe. Let the honeſt Artificer purſue his Trade with cheerful Induſtry, and rejoice that the Weight of States and Kingdoms does not lie upon his Shoulders. Let the Man of a middle Station know his Happineſs, in poſſeſſing with quiet Obſcurity, all the Comforts of Society and domeſtic Life, with Leiſure, and Advantage for making the nobleſt Improvements of the Mind. Let the Rich and Great ſtill look higher, and inſtead of repining at

"Ceremony, the Idol Ceremony!"

which debars them of thoſe free and humble Joys, delight themſelves with their extenſive Power of doing Good, and diffuſing Happineſs around them.

What

What an Alternative is put into the Choice of Man! By Employment or Miſuſe of the Faculties aſſigned him, he may riſe to what Dignity, or ſink to what Baſeneſs he will, in the Claſs of moral Beings. Human Exiſtence is an ineſtimable Gem, capable of receiving whatever Poliſh we will pleaſe to give it: and if heightened with the Diligence it ought, will ſhine in due Time, with a Luſtre more dazzling than the Stars.

It would not be fantaſtical (for its Foundation is in Truth and Reality) to form a Scale of Nobility very different from the common Diſtinctions of Birth, Titles, and Fortune; and wholly according to that Figure, Perſons make in the moral World, and according to their various Degrees of Improvement and Uſefulneſs. The Change would not be total. Many, who are now high in Life, would continue ſo: but not a few would be ſtrangely degraded.

Of what Account indeed, in the true Syſtem of Life is He (be he what he will in Greatneſs) who ſleeps away his Being in indolent Amuſement? Whoſe Hours hang heavy on his Hands, without the Gaming-Table, the Bottle, the Buffoon or the Taylor? And whoſe Mind amidſt them all, is perpetually clouded with a ſplenetic Diſcontent, the inevitable Ruſt of unuſed Faculties? Uncomfortable to himſelf, and unimportant to his Fellow-Creatures, whatever were his Advantages of Nature and Fortune, he has degraded himſelf from them all. A Day-Labourer, who does his utmoſt at the Plough and the Cart, is a much more reſpectable Being.

In this Scale, the Miſer's Plea of Poverty would be readily admitted, as witneſſed by his anxious Look and ſordid Life: While the frank Heart and open Countenance ſhould be ſet down for the Merit of a Plum.

Even the Miſer himſelf has a Claſs of Inferiors, and that, without ſpeaking of the

the downright Vicious, who come under another Kind of Conſideration. Theſe are the Oyſter-Livers: Such as loſe the very Uſe of their Limbs from mere Lazineſs, and waſte Year after Year fixed to one uncomfortable Spot; where they eat and drink, ſleep and grumble on: while the Duty of their Situation properly attended to, would make them happy in themſelves, and a Happineſs to others. Were the Pearl taken out of that unſightly Shell, what a Circulation of Riches and Ornaments might it make in Society! But while theſe poor Animals can fatten on their barren Rock, it matters not to them.

If Cowardice ſinks Perſons lower than all other Vices, beneath even theſe will come in the poor Slaves of falſe Shame, the mean Deſerters of their Duty. How many, that now paſs for Men of Honour and Spirit, would appear more weak and timorous than Female Fear. Some not daring to refuſe a Challenge: others drinking againſt

Inclination, or affronting Religion againſt their own Conſciences: or prodigal of Health and Fortune, from merely wanting Strength to reſiſt the vain Current of Faſhion. No black Slave ſold in a Market is ſo far from Liberty, as every one of theſe.

In numberleſs ſuch Ways, does the bewildered Race of Man deviate from the Paths of Felicity and Glory, and childiſhly ſquander away ineſtimable Advantages. For juſt in Proportion to the Improvement of thoſe Faculties, with which Heaven has intruſted us, our Beings are ennobled, and our Happineſs heightened. The Enjoyments of a mere animal Exiſtence are flat and low. The Comforts of plain ordinary Life, in thoſe who have ſome Feelings of the Connexions of Society, but no Idea of any Thing higher, riſe in the next Degree. The Pleaſures of an improved Imagination take in a Circle vaſtly wider and more fair. The Joys of a benevolent Heart animated by an active diligent Spi-

rit, refined Sentiments, and Affections juſtly warm, exceed the moſt gay Imagination. The ſtrong Senſe, and genuine Love of Truth and Goodneſs, with all thoſe nobleſt Diſpoſitions, that fill a Mind affected and penetrated, as it ought to be, with a Senſe of Religion, and practiſing every Part of Chriſtian Duty, aſcends ſtill higher, and raiſes Humanity to that Point, from which it begins to claim a near Alliance with ſuperior Natures.

ESSAY II.

POLITENESS is the moſt agreeable Band of Society, and I cannot help attributing more ill Conſequences to the general Diſregard of it, than People, at preſent, are apt to attend to. Perhaps it may be ſo intirely laid aſide, by the Time that this Manuſcript comes into any Body's Hand, that the Page, which preſerves ſome faint Outlines of its Reſemblance, may be thought no unuſeful one: or at leaſt by the Lovers of Antiquity, may be read with Pleaſure, as containing ſome curious Remains of an elegant Art: an Art, that humanized the World, for many Years, till the fine Spirits of the preſent Age, thought fit to throw it off, as a narrow Reſtraint, and a mean Prejudice of Education.

Politeneſs

Politeneſs is the juſt Medium between Form and Rudeneſs. It is the Conſequence of a benevolent Nature, which ſhows itſelf, to general Acquaintance, in an obliging, unconſtrained Civility, as it does, to more particular ones, in diſtinguiſhed Acts of Kindneſs. This good Nature muſt be directed by a Juſtneſs of Senſe, and a Quickneſs of Diſcernment, that knows how to uſe every Opportunity of exerciſing it, and to proportion the Inſtances of it, to every Character and Situation. It is a Reſtraint laid by Reaſon and Benevolence, upon every Irregularity of the Temper, which, in Obedience to them, is forced to accommodate itſelf even to the fantaſtic Laws, which Cuſtom and Faſhion have eſtabliſhed, if, by that Means, it can procure, in any Degree, the Satisfaction, or good Opinion of any Part of Mankind. Thus paying an obliging Deference to their Judgment, ſo far as it is not inconſiſtent with the higher Obligations of Virtue and Religion.

This

This muſt be accompanied with an Elegance of Taſte, and a Delicacy obſervant of the leaſt Trifles, which tend to pleaſe, or to oblige: and though its Foundation muſt be rooted in the Heart, it can ſcarce be perfected without a complete Knowledge of the World.

In Society, it is the Medium, that blends all different Tempers, into the moſt pleaſing Harmony, while it impoſes Silence on the Loquacious, and inclines the moſt Reſerved to furniſh their Share of the Converſation, it repreſſes the Ambition of ſhining alone, and increaſes the Deſire of being mutually agreeable. It takes off the Edge of Raillery, and gives Delicacy to Wit. It preſerves a proper Subordination amongſt all Ranks of People, and can reconcile a perfect Eaſe, with the moſt exact Propriety.

To Superiors it appears in a reſpectful Freedom: no Greatneſs can awe it into Servility,

Servility, and no Intimacy can ſink it into a regardleſs Familiarity.

To Inferiors it ſhows itſelf in an unaſſuming good Nature. Its Aim is to raiſe Them to You, not to let You down to Them. It at once maintains the Dignity of your Station, and expreſſes the Goodneſs of your Heart.

To Equals it is every Thing that is charming. It ſtudies their Inclinations, prevents their Deſires, attends to every little Exactneſs of Behaviour, and all the Time appears perfectly diſengaged and careleſs.

Such, and ſo amiable is true Politeneſs, by People of wrong Heads and unworthy Hearts diſgraced in its two Extremes: and, by the Generality of Mankind, confined within the narrow Bounds of mere good Breeding, which, in Truth, is only one Inſtance of it.

There is a Kind of Character, which does not in the leaſt deſerve to be reckoned polite, though it is exact in every Punctilio of Behaviour. Such as would not for the World omit paying you the Civility of a Bow, or fail in the leaſt Circumſtance of Decorum: But then theſe People do this ſo merely for their own Sake, that whether you are pleaſed, or embarraſſed with it, is little of their Care. They have performed their own Parts, and are ſatisfied. One there is, who ſays more civil Things than half Mankind beſides, and yet, is "So obliging that he never obliged." For while he is paying the higheſt court to ſome one Perſon of the Company, he muſt, of Courſe, neglect the reſt, which is ill made up, by a forced Recollection at laſt, and ſome lame Civility, which, however it may be worded, does in Effect, expreſs only this, "I proteſt I had quite forgot "you: but as inſignificant as you are, I "muſt not, for my own Sake, let you go "Home out of Humour." Thus every one in their Turn, finding his Civility to

be

be juſt as variable as his Intereſt, no one thinks himſelf obliged to him for it.

This then is a Proof, that true Politeneſs, whoſe great End is giving real Pleaſure, can have its Source only in a virtuous and benevolent Heart. Yet this is not all: it muſt obſerve Propriety too. There is a Character of perfect good Nature, that loves to have every Thing about it happy or merry. This is a Character greatly to be loved, but has little Claim to the Title of Politeneſs. Such Perſons have no Notion of Freedom without Noiſe and Tumult: and by taking off every proper Reſtraint, and ſinking themſelves to the Level of their Companions, even leſſen the Pleaſure theſe would have in the Company of their Superiors.

Cleanthes too loved to have every Body about him pleaſed and eaſy. But in his Family, Freedom went Hand in Hand, with Order; while his Experience of the World, in an Age of more real Accompliſhments,

pliſhments, preſerved his whole Behaviour agreeable to his Company, and becoming his Station.

Certainly this Regard to the different Stations of Life, is too much neglected by all Ranks of People. A few Reflexions will ſhow this but too plainly. That the Government of States and Kingdoms ſhould be placed in a few Hands was, in the earlieſt Ages of the World found neceſſary to the well-being of Society. Power gave a Kind of Sanction to the Perſons, in whoſe Hands it was veſted; and when the People's Minds were awed into Obedience, there was the leſs Need of Puniſhments to reſtrain their Actions. Each various Rank of them viewed, with profound Reſpect that, which was moſt regularly beautiful: and the Pile of Government roſe, in due Proportion, with Harmony in all its Parts.

Very different is the preſent Scene, where all Sorts of People put themſelves upon a Level, where the meaneſt and moſt ignorant

rant cenſure, without Reſerve, the greateſt and the wiſeſt: where the ſublimeſt Subjects are ſcanned without Reverence, the ſofteſt treated without Delicacy.

There was a Time, when from this Principle of Politeneſs, our Sex received a thouſand delicate Diſtinctions, which made us as it were Amends for our Excluſion from the more ſhining and tumultuous Scenes of Life. Perhaps it is a good deal our own Fault, that within ſome Years, the Manner of treating us has been entirely altered. When the fine Lady becomes a Hoyden, no Wonder if the fine Gentleman behaves to her, like a Clown. When People go out of their own proper Character, it is like what ſilly Folks imagine about going out of the Conjurer's Circle: beyond thoſe Limits you muſt expect no Mercy.

It would be endleſs to reckon up the various Errors on each Side of true Politeneſs, which form Humouriſts and Flatterers,

ers, Characters of blunt, or ceremonious Impertinence. But that I may give as true a Standard of the Thing itſelf, as I am capable of doing, I will conclude my Paper with the Character of Cynthio, from whoſe Converſation and Behaviour I have poſſibly collected moſt of the Hints which form it.

" Cynthio has added to his natural " Senſe a thorough Knowledge of the " World: by which he has attained that " maſterly Eaſe in Behaviour, and that " graceful Careleſſneſs of Manner, that " no Body, I know, poſſeſſes in ſo high a " Degree. You may ſee, that his Polite- " neſs flows from ſomething ſuperior to " the little Forms of Cuſtom, from a hu- " mane and benevolent Heart directed by " a Judgment, that always ſeizes what is " juſt and proper; and formed into ſuch an " habitual good Breeding, that no forced " Attention ever puts you in Mind, at the " Time, that Cynthio is taking Pains to " entertain you, though upon Recollec-

" tion

" tion you find him to be, for that very
" Reaſon, a Man of the compleateſt Po-
" liteneſs.

" His Converſation is always ſuited to
" the Company he is in, yet ſo as never to
" depart from the Propriety of his own
" Character. As he is naturally indolent,
" he is generally the leaſt talkative of the
" Set; but he makes up for this, by ex-
" preſſing more in a few Words, than the
" Generality of People do in a great many
" Sentences. He is formed indeed for
" making Converſation agreeable: ſince
" he has good Nature, which makes him
" place every Thing that can have a Share
" in it, in the moſt favourable Light that
" it is capable of: and a Turn of Hu-
" mour, that can put the moſt trifling
" Subject in ſome amuſing Point of View.

" In a large Company, Cynthio was ne-
" ver known to engroſs the whole Atten-
" tion to ſome one favourite Subject, which
" could ſuit with only a Part of it; or to
" dictate,

" dictate, even in a ſmall one. With a very " quick Diſcernment, to avoid ſpeaking or " thinking ſeverely of the many Faults " and Follies, this World abounds with, " is a Proof of an excellent Temper too, " which can be no Way conſtantly ſup- " ported, and made in its Effects, conſiſt- " ent with itſelf, but upon the Baſis of " ſerious Principles.

" This then is the Support of Cynthio's " Character, and this it is, that regulates " his Actions, even where his natural In- " clination would direct him differently. " Thus, when the Welfare of the Public " is concerned, he can aſſume a Strict- " neſs, that carries great Awe with it, " and a Severity, that a mere conſtitutio- " nal good Nature would be hurt by, " though it anſwers the moſt valuable " Ends of true Humanity. Thus his na- " tural Indolence is allowed to ſhow itſelf, " only in Things of trifling Conſequence, " or ſuch as he thinks ſo, becauſe they " regard only himſelf: but whenever he

" has

" has any Opportunity of ſerving a Friend,
" or doing a worthy Action, no Body is
" ſo ready, ſo vigilant, ſo active, ſo con-
" ſtant in the Purſuit; which is ſeldom
" unſucceſsful, becauſe he has a uſeful
" good Senſe, that directs him to the pro-
" pereſt Methods of proceeding. Upon
" ſuch an Occaſion, not the longeſt Jour-
" ney, or moſt tedious Solicitation, no
" Appearance of Trouble or of Danger
" can diſcourage him.

" Sincerity is ſo eſſential a Part of
" Friendſhip, that no one ſo perfect, in
" its other Branches, can be wanting in
" that. But how, you will ſay, can this
" be reconciled with Politeneſs? How can
" that, whoſe utmoſt Care is never to of-
" fend, ever venture upon telling a diſ-
" agreeable Truth? Why this is one of
" the Wonders, which a good and a right
" Intention, well directed can perform:
" and Cynthio can even oblige People, by
" telling them very plainly of their Faults."

I per-

I perceive, I have wandered from my firſt Intention, which was only to give a general Sketch of this Character, as influenced by that Humanity, whoſe Conſequence is ſuch a Deſire of pleaſing, as is the Source of Politeneſs. But before I have done with it, I muſt add this one diſtinguiſhing Stroke, that though many People may excel in ſeparate good Qualities and Accompliſhments, more than Cynthio, yet I never ſaw them ſo equally proportioned, or ſo agreeably blended as in him, to form that whole Behaviour that makes him the fitteſt Example for an Eſſay on this Subject.

ESSAY

ESSAY III.

LET me be allowed to make a new Word, and let that Word be *Accommodableneſs*.

The Diſpoſition of Mind, I mean by that Word to expreſs, is of ſuch conſtant and univerſal Uſe, that it is certainly worth while to diſtinguiſh it by a Name of its own. We Engliſh have not much of it in our Nature, and therefore it is no Wonder we have not an Expreſſion to ſuit it. It is ſuch a Flexibility of Mind, as hinders the leaſt Struggle between Reaſon and Temper. It is the very Height and Perfection of good Humour, ſhown as well in an inſtantaneous Tranſition from Mirth to Seriouſneſs, when that is beſt ſuited to the Place and People, as it is in the livelieſt

Flaſhes of Gaiety. It is an Art of ſitting ſo looſe from our own Humours and Deſigns, that the mere having expected, or intended, or wiſhed a Thing to be otherwiſe than it is, ſhall not, for a Moment ruffle our Brows, or diſcompoſe our Thoughts. It is an Art, for it requires Time and Pains to perfect it.

All this is indeed included in what has been ſaid of Politeneſs, but it is worth dwelling upon in a new Light. It is the Means of making every trifling Occurrence in Life, of ſome Uſe to us. For want of it, *Liking and Luck* are ever at croſs Purpoſes. To-day we are ſad: and then if we fall into a jovial Company, all their Mirth ſeems diſplaced, and but grates upon our Fancy. To-morrow, we are as whimſically determined to be merry: and then, how unſuited is our Temper, to the Scenes of ſad Improvement, we ſo often meet with! How unfit are we then to commiſerate the Wretched, or to draw juſt Conſiderations from the melancholy Side of Life!

This

This Body, by ſome Accident or other, we look upon in a Light of Prejudice: A fooliſh Story told of them, or perhaps a diſagreeable Look, or a peculiar Trick, makes us loſe all the Advantage, that might be had, by attending to their more valuable Qualifications: for every Body has ſome.—Another we deſpiſe, merely for our own Ignorance of their Worth. We look upon Perſons in a Light of Burleſque, from ſome ridiculous Circumſtance; when, perhaps, their ſerious Character, has ſomething really good in it, that is quite paſt over. I have felt it myſelf often: and that makes me dwell upon the Subject, for I think, one always talks beſt from Experience.

I have read ſomewhere, a Fairy Story, in which a Princeſs is deſcribed, born under ſuch a Charm, that till ſhe came to a certain Age, it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould ever enjoy any laſting Satisfaction. The Happineſs of her enſuing Life depended upon the obſerving this Condition: And

for that Reaſon, thoſe Fairies, who had the Care of her Education, were moſt exact in their Attention to it. Did ſhe begin to take Pleaſure in any Employment? It was immediately changed, and her Application was called off to ſome new one. As ſoon as ſhe had got over the Difficulties of that, ſhe was engaged in a third: and ſo on, Year after Year, till ſhe was quite grown up. If any Amuſement was propoſed, if ſhe began to taſte the leaſt Delight, in the Splendour of a public Show, or the Gaiety of a rural Landſcape, the Scene was immediately ſhifted, and a dull Solitude took the Place of what had charmed her.

Such is our Situation in this World. In ſuch a Caſe, all the poor Princeſs had for it, was to ſhift her Inclinations, as faſt as the Fairies could her Amuſements: and when ſhe had learned to do this, I think indeed, one might anſwer for it, that the reſt of her Life could not fail to be happy.

Our

Our Humours and Diſpoſitions are certainly as various, as the Accidents that happen to exerciſe them: but then, the Misfortune is, that they are frequently miſplaced. I have often been in a Humour for moralizing and improving, when my Fancy had much more properly been filled with gay Images of an Aſſembly: Then, that Idleneſs might not loſe its Due, how frequently have my Thoughts wandered from a philoſophical Lecture, to a crowded Park, nay ſometimes from a Sermon, to a Ball-Room?

To continue always in the ſame Turn of Humour, be it ever ſo graceful on ſome Occaſions, is nothing better than dancing ſmoothly out of Time. Some People have ſuch an eternal Simper upon their Face, that they will tell you the moſt melancholy Story, or expreſs the moſt pathetic Concern, with a Smile. Others have ſuch an Air of earneſt Attention, that they will liſten to a Goſſip's Tale with the Gravity of a Philoſopher.

All have ſome good Qualities, ſomething or other, in their Character or Converſation, that rightly attended to, we may be the better for. When in Company with People of mere good Humour, we ſhould waken all the mirthful Faculties of our Mind, and take this Time for unbending our more ſerious Thoughts. We are not to conſider whether one is of a proper Rank, or another of an agreeable Aſpect, or whether we might not be better employed in our Cloſets, or better engaged in Company elſewhere: but accommodate ourſelves to the preſent Situation, and make the beſt of it. Be the Company ever ſo dull, they are human Creatures at leaſt, capable of feeling Pleaſure, or Uneaſineſs, in ſome Degree, of being obliged or diſobliged: and therefore, if we are ever ſo diſſatisfied ourſelves, if we may contribute any Way to the Satisfaction of our ſtupid Companions, good Nature will find it no diſagreeable Employment, and it may well enough be put in the Balance, againſt moſt of thoſe, we are ſo angry to be interrupted in.

Had

Had I ſet my Heart on ſuch a favourite Scheme? and am I diſappointed? This is what Children well educated can bear with great good Humour, and are rewarded with Sugar-Plums. Shall People then, who have the Uſe of Reaſon, and the Pleaſure of Reflection upon reaſonable Actions, be more childiſh than they, and add one diſagreeable Thing to another, by tying ill Humour to the Heels of Diſappointment?

The Mind, that is abſolutely wedded to its own Opinions, will cheriſh them to a Degree of Folly and Obſtinacy, that would be inconceivable but for frequent Inſtances: very frequent indeed in this Country, which is reckoned, I believe juſtly, to abound in Humouriſts, more than almoſt any Nation of the habitable Globe. Whether this be one Effect attending on the glorious Stubborneſs of the Spirit of Liberty, or whether we take ſome Tincture from the November Sullenneſs of the Climate, I know not: But our Want of Accommo-

dableneſs is very perceivable in the Reception, which our common People uſually give to Foreigners. Their Language is ridiculed, their Manners obſerved with a haughty Kind of Contempt: all Minds ſeem to ſit aloof to them, as if they were Enemies, Encroachers, that have nothing to do amongſt us, no Right to give us Trouble, or put us out of our Way.

If we would but learn to put ourſelves a little in the Place of others, we ſhould ſoon learn, with Pleaſure, to ſuit ourſelves to their Diſpoſition. But we are apt to imagine, that every Body muſt ſee every Thing, juſt in the ſame Light that it appears to us: if they do not, it is very ſtrange, and they are no Companions for us. Thus, it ſeems monſtrous, in a Foreigner to ſpeak our Language oddly, when we are ſo perfectly acquainted with it ourſelves. We are prodigiouſly inclined to think People impertinent, for aſking Queſtions about what we know very well ourſelves: unleſs indeed we happen to

to be in a Humour of dictating and inſtructing, and then it is a Crime of the ſame Nature, for People to know any Thing before Hand, that we have a Mind to tell them.

Thus we forget our firſt Opinions of Places, Things, and People, and wonder that others do not, at firſt Sight, perceive them, in the ſame Light that we do, juſt at that Time: though perhaps it is by Dint of Reflection, that we have placed them in it. It may however be ſpeaking too generally to ſay *we*. I am ſure I have often experienced this in myſelf.

It was the diſtinguiſhing Character of a poor Idiot, whom I had once Occaſion to ſee a good deal of, that he had ſo little of this Accommodableneſs, as to be quite outrageous, upon the leaſt Alteration, in any trifling Circumſtances, he had been uſed to obſerve. He expreſt his Anger, in one Way indeed, and We expreſs ours in another, or perhaps are wiſe enough to

keep moſt of it to ourſelves: but there ſtill remains enough to take off all the Grace of what we do, or ſubmit to, thus unwillingly, and the Principle of Folly, that makes us feel ſo ſtrong a Diſlike, is the ſame in both: only this poor Creature deſerved Pity, while in us, it is a Matter of Choice.

ESSAY IV.

THERE is no one Diſpoſition of the human Heart, that affords ſuch exquiſite Pleaſure, or Pain, as that, which we call *Delicacy*. It is the Poliſh of the Mind, ſoiled by the leaſt Breath, and affected by the ſlighteſt Touch. A delicate Turn of Thought is, in ſome Caſes, extremely agreeable, is the Sign of a valuable Mind, (for baſe Metals are not capable of receiving any great Degree of Poliſh) but will not go half ſo well, through the World, as that which is more plain, and rough.

Yet, as there is ſomething in this Diſpoſition peculiarly elegant and amiable, People are apt to encourage themſelves in it, till from a Grace, it becomes a Weakneſs, and diffuſes Unhappineſs to all around them,

them, who muſt weigh with the exacteſt Care all their Words and Actions: and it is extremely poſſible, that all their Care may not be enough to prevent giving ſome grievous Offence, which they never meant, and which will expreſs itſelf in perpetual Smartneſſes, or an eternal Flow of Tears, according as the Conſtitution of the delicate Perſon inclines to Anger, or to Melancholy. In the latter Caſe, it is more unhappy than in the former: for haſty Anger is eaſily paſt off; but no Body of good Nature can bear to ſee a Perſon affected, in the moſt painful Manner, by Things ſo trifling, as they may be guilty of, every Moment, without knowing any Thing of the Matter.

This Conſideration ſhould make us extremely careful in our Behaviour, to thoſe, amongſt whom we live. Perhaps ſome little Heedleſſneſs of ours, may ſeem a moſt cruel Slight to one, we never intend to grieve, and oppreſs a worthy Mind with the moſt melancholy Dejection. A careleſs

leſs Word, ſpoken quite at Random, or merely by Rote, may give a delicate Heart the moſt anxious Diſtreſs: and thoſe of us, who have the moſt Prudence and good Nature, ſay and do an hundred Things, in our Way of talking, about Characters we know little of, or behaving towards thoſe, to whom we little attend, that have much more grievous Conſequences, than we are aware of.

But then, on the other Hand, we ſhould, in ourſelves, moſt ſtrictly guard againſt all Exceſs of this Delicacy; and though we cannot help feeling Things, in the quickeſt Manner, for the Moment, we ſhould arm our Reaſon againſt our Feeling, and not permit Imagination to indulge it, and nurſe it up into a Miſery: for Miſery, if indulged, it will certainly occaſion: Since an Exceſs of Delicacy is the Source of conſtant Diſſatisfaction, through too eager a Purſuit of ſomething every Way higher, than is to be had.

The Perſon of delicate Judgment ſees every Thing, as it were, with a microſcopic Eye: ſo that what would be a pleaſing Object, to a common Spectator, is, to him, unſupportably coarſe, and diſagreeable. The Perſon of lively and delicate Imagination diſdains the common *Routine* of Comfort and Satisfaction; and ſeeks for Happineſs in an airy Sphere not formed to give it: or purſues Miſery, through a wild and endleſs Maze, which at every Turning grows more inextricable. By this refined Delicacy of Sentiment, to put ourſelves on ſo different a Footing, from the reſt of the World, that it is ſcarce poſſible, we ſhould ever underſtand one another, is only vain Vexation.

In Friendſhips eſpecially, this Exceſs of Delicacy is often of fatal ill Conſequence. From hence ſpring Suſpicions and Jealouſies; from hence ariſe Doubts and Diſquiets that know no End, unleſs it be, that they often quite weary out the Patience of the Perſons, whom they are thus perpetually

ally teazing for their Affection. I have known Inſtances of this Kind, that are ſufficient Warnings againſt it.

As for the Affairs of common Life, they can ſcarcely go on where every little Nicety is to be turned into a Matter of Importance. I knew a Family, good, agreeable, ſenſible, and fond of each other, to the higheſt Degree: but where each was ſo delicate, and ſo tender of the Delicacy of the reſt, that they could never talk to one another, of any ſerious Buſineſs, but were forced to tranſact it all, by Means of a third Perſon, a Man of plain Senſe, and a common Friend to all.

Poor Lucius! How much Conſtraint and real Uneaſineſs does he ſuffer from the Delicacy, that proceeds from having a Genius infinitely ſuperior to moſt he meets with. By having a Mind above the low Enjoyments of this State of Being, he is deprived of many Hours of moſt innocent Cheerfulneſs, which other People are hap-

py in. He has an Underſtanding, ſo fitted for the deepeſt Reſearches, and the ſublimeſt Speculations, that the common Affairs and Engagements of Life, ſeem vaſtly beneath him. He has a Delicacy, in his Turn of Mind, that is ſhocked every Day, by the leſs refined Behaviour and Converſation of the Generality of Mankind: and it muſt be a very choſen Society indeed, that he prefers to his beloved Solitude. This Diſpoſition gives him a Reſervedneſs, that in another Character, might paſs for Pride, as it makes him mix leſs freely in thoſe Companies, that he is unavoidably engaged in. However it has certainly this ill Conſequence, that it makes his Virtues of leſs extenſive Influence, than they would be, if they were more generally known. He is naturally, extremely grave, and perhaps with the Aſſiſtance of Reaſon and Experience, which prove the Inſufficiency of any Pleaſures or Attainments, in this Life, to make us happy; this Serioufneſs is heightened ſo as to give himſelf many a gloomy Moment, though other People never feel the

Effect

Effect of it, by any ill Humour, or Severity towards them. A Turn of Mind ſo ſuperior to any of the common Occurrences, or Amuſements of Life, can ſeldom be much affected or enlivened by them: but as ſo excellent an Underſtanding muſt have the trueſt Taſte for real Wit, ſo no one has a more lively Senſe of all, that is peculiarly juſt and delicate. Theſe Pleaſures, however, are little Compenſations, for the much more frequent Diſguſts, to which the ſame Turn of Mind renders him liable. Happy, thrice happy are thoſe humble People, whoſe Senſations are fitted to the World they live in.

Thoſe Pleaſures, which the Imagination greatly heightens, it will certainly make us pay dear enough for: ſince the Pain of parting with them, will be greatly increaſed, in full Proportion, not to their Value, but to our Enjoyment. The World was intended to be juſt what it is; and there is no Likelihood of our ſucceeding in the romantic Scheme of raiſing it above what it is. To

diſtract

diſtract ourſelves with a continual Succeſſion of eager Hopes, and anxious Fears, is a Folly deſtructive to our Nature, and to the very End of our Being. We are formed for moderate Senſations either of Pain or Pleaſure; to feel ſuch Degrees of Uneaſineſs only as we are very able to ſupport: and to enjoy ſuch a Meaſure of Happineſs, as we may eaſily reſign, nay thankfully too, when Religion has opened the Proſpect to a brighter Scene: to meet with many Rubs and Difficulties, which we muſt get over, or ſtumble over, as well as we can: to converſe with Creatures imperfect, like ourſelves, and to bear with all their Imperfections. It ſeems then, that the only Way of paſſing through Life, as we ought, is to place our Minds in a State of as great Tranquillity, as is conſiſtent with our not becoming ſtupid.

ESSAY V.

THE Advantages of Frugality do not deſerve to be leſs conſidered than thoſe of Generoſity: for where alas! ſhall Bounty find its neceſſary Fund, if thoughtleſs Prodigality has ſquandered it away. When I hear of thouſands, and ten thouſands ſpent by People, who in the midſt of immenſe Riches reduce themſelves to all the Shifts and Pinches of a narrow Fortune, I know not how to recover my Aſtoniſhment at the Infatuation, that leads them to annihilate ſuch Treaſures: for it may really be called annihilating them, when they are ſpent to no one good Purpoſe, and leave no one honourable Memorial behind them. A Fortune thus laviſhed away becomes the Prey of the Worthleſs: and is like a Quantity of Gold Duſt,

diſperſed

diſperſed uſeleſsly in the Air, that might have been melted down, and formed into regal Crowns, and Monuments of Glory.

I think one now ſcarcely ever hears an immenſe Fortune named, but ſomebody adds with a Shake of the Head—*It is vaſtly run out—He is in very narrow Circumſtances —They are in great Straits.*——Aſk the Occaſion, and you will find few Inſtances of real Generoſity, or public Spirit, or even of a well-judged Magnificence: but all has gone amongſt Voters, Fidlers, Table Companions, profuſe Servants, diſhoneſt Stewards, and a ſtrange Rabble of People, that are every one of them the worſe for it. This is pitiable: and for this, and nothing elſe, a Man of Quality is reduced to all the Meanneſſes imaginable. He muſt be dependent: he muſt court the Smiles of Power: he muſt often be rapacious and diſhoneſt.

I remember a Friend of mine had once an excellent Conceit of a Cave, at the upper

per End of which were two enchanted Glaſſes, with Curtains drawn before them, that were to be conſulted every Evening, in order for the forming a Judgment of the Actions of the Day. The firſt Glaſs ſhowed what they *might* have been, and what Effects ſuch and ſuch Opportunities ought to have produced. When the Curtain was undrawn before the other, it ſhowed, *tout au naturel*, what they *had* been. Were one to contemplate, in theſe Glaſſes, on the ſpending one of thoſe great Eſtates, which reduce our fine People to ſuch Difficulties, what a coup d'œil the firſt would preſent! A wide Track of Country adorned and improved: a thouſand honeſt Families flouriſhing on their well cultivated Farms: I cannot tell whether one ſhould not ſee a Church or two, riſing in a plain ſort of Majeſty amidſt the Landſcape. In another Part of it, would appear Manufactures encouraged, Poverty relieved, and Multitudes of People praying for the Welfare of the happy Maſter. His Tradeſmen, his Domeſtics, every Body that had any

any Connection with him, would appear with a cheerful and a grateful Air. They, in their Turns, would diſpenſe Good and Happineſs to all, with whom they had any Concern. At the Family Seat, would be ſeen an unaſſuming Grandeur, and an honeſt Hoſpitality, free from Profuſeneſs and Intemperance, one may ſay as of Hamlet's two Pictures,

Such ſhould be Greatneſs:—Now behold what follows
For here is Fortune, like a mildew'd Ear
Blaſting each wholeſome Grain——

In the true hiſtorical Glaſs, what may we ſee? Perhaps a Pack of Hounds, a Cellar, an Election. Perhaps a Gaming-Table, with all thoſe helliſh Faces that ſurround it. An artful Director perhaps, and an indolent Pupil. Oppreſſion gripes every poor Wretch within its Graſp, and theſe again oppreſs their own Inferiors and Dependents: All look hopeleſs and joyleſs: and

and every Look ſeems to conceal a ſecret Murmur. On the Fore-Ground perhaps there ſtands a magnificent Palace, in the Italian Taſte: innumerable Temples, Obeliſks, and Statues riſe among the Woods: and never were Flora and Pomona, Venus and Diana, with all the Train of fabulous Divinities more expenſively honoured in Greece and Rome, than in theſe Fairy Scenes. The Church in the mean Time, ſtands with a Wooden Tower: the Fields are poorly cultivated, the Neighbourhood diſcontented, and ever upon the Catch to find all poſſible Faults in thoſe proud Great Ones, with whom they have no cheerful friendly Intercourſe. Fine Clothes, and coſtly Jewels glitter, perhaps, in ſome Part of the Glaſs: but how can they adorn Faces grown wan with inward Care: or give Gracefulneſs to thoſe, who muſt always have the humbled Air of Inferiority, when they happen to meet the Eye of their unpaid Tradeſmen, whoſe Families are ſtarving upon their Account?

The Man of thoughtleſs good Nature, who laviſhes his Money to a hundred poor Devils, (as is the genteel Phraſe to call thoſe, that have run themſelves into Miſery from mere Worthleſſneſs) I ſay, when Wretches, that deſerved only Puniſhment and Ignominy, have drained this generous Sieve of all he had to beſtow, to what Grief is he expoſed, when he meets with an Object of real Diſtreſs, one that has, perhaps, been ruined through his Means, and is forced to ſay with the fine Gentleman, in Beaumont and Fletcher,

" I wanted whence to give it, yet his
" Eyes
" Spoke for him: Theſe I could have
" ſatisfied
" With ſome unfruitful Sorrow"——

Would it not be quite worth while for any Body to avoid ſuch Uneaſineſſes as theſe, when it can be done merely by a little Thought, and a little Order? Methinks an Exactneſs of Method, and a frequent Review of Affairs would make every Thing

Thing perfectly eaſy. Might it not be poſſible for a Man of Fortune to divide his Eſtate into ſeveral imaginary Parcels? And, appropriating each to its particular Purpoſe, ſpend it, within thoſe Bounds, as freely, and with an Air as open, as the thoughtleſs Prodigal; and yet be ſure, by this Means, never to run out, and never to beſtow upon any one Article more than it deſerved.

I will ſuppoſe myſelf at this preſent poſſeſſed of ten thouſand a Year; nor will the Suppoſition make me at all vain, gentle Reader, ſince it implies but the being a Steward to other People, and a Slave to Propriety. Oh it is ten Times the more indolent Thing to have but a little, and yet the ſame Kind of Management is required in all. Well: but what ſhall I do with this Eſtate of mine? Firſt of all I buy me a large and pompous Account Book. Then I conſider how much muſt neceſſarily be employed in mere Living: and I write down the Sum Total, on the

firſt Page. This is afterwards ſubdivided into its proper diſtinct Articles: and each of them has a Page allotted to itſelf. And here it muſt be obſerved, that there are innumerable Proprieties of Appearance, as indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the rich Man, as bare Food and Clothing to the Poor. The other Pages of the Book muſt each have their Title at Top, as thus: *Charities* 1000 *l.*—*For the Service of my Friends, and of the Public* 1000 *l.*—*For proper Improvements of my Houſes, Gardens, Eſtates,* 1000 *l.* and ſo on. I doubt whether Knick-knacks, Cabinets, or any immoderate Expences, in Jewels, Plate, or Pictures, would find a Place in ſuch a Liſt as this.

It would ſurely be eaſy, by frequently comparing the daily Articles of Expence under each Head, with the Determination marked at Top, to keep every one within Bounds, and to enjoy what is in our own Power, without, in the leaſt, pining after what is not: For *that* we may read the Pre-

Precepts of the Stoics: and for the other, let us conſider, a little, thoſe Inſtances, we may ſee, all around us, of good Characters diſgraced by an ill-judged Savingneſs in ſome inſignificant Particulars, and by a Want of Eaſe and Propriety, in trifling Expences.

If People have any Eſteem for Frugality, they ſhould try to do it honour by ſhowing, that it is not inconſiſtent with a becoming and a generous Spirit. I have heard very many People accuſed of Covetouſneſs, and generally hated, under that odious Character, who perhaps had no Principle of that Kind, and who threw away, often, as much upon fooliſh Expences, that had not ſtruck them in the ſaving View, as they pinched out of others, which made them look paltry and mean, in the Eyes of the World. Few People I believe are heartily covetous throughout: and this makes it ſo eaſy for them to flatter themſelves, that they are not tainted at all with a Vice, the very Notion of which

would affront them: and for thoſe in the other Extreme, they too deceive themſelves, in the ſame Sort. Whence comes the old Proverb,

Penny wiſe and Pound fooliſh.

ESSAY

ESSAY VI.

THERE are a great many Things, that ſound mighty well in the declamatory Way, and yet have no Sort of Truth or Juſtneſs, in them. The Equality between Poverty and Riches, or rather, the ſuperior Advantages of the former, is a pretty philoſophical Paradox, that I could never comprehend. I will grant very readily, that the ſhort Sleeps of a labouring Man, are full as ſweet and wholeſome, as the Slumbers indulged upon Down Beds, and under gilded Roofs. I will readily confeſs, that let People have never ſo many Apartments, they can be but in one at a Time: and in a Word, that the Luxury and Pageantry, that Riches bring with them, is deſpicable, and infinitely leſs eligible, than the Simplicity

of plainer Life. It muſt be owned too, that Greatneſs and Fortune, place People in the Midſt of innumerable Difficulties: and that they are ſeverely accountable for all thoſe Advantages, they neglect to improve. But ſo, indeed, a Man is a more accountable Creature than a Hog: and yet none, but a Gryllus, I believe, would prefer the Situation of the latter.

I do not ſay, that People ſhould upon all Occaſions, put themſelves forward, and aſpire to thoſe dangerous Heights, which perhaps, they were never formed to aſcend. The Fable of Phæthon would be much more inſtructive than ſuch a Leſſon as this: but I would ſay, and ſay it loudly, to all, whom Heaven has placed already in the Midſt of Riches and Honours, that they poſſeſs the higheſt Privilege, and ought to exert themſelves accordingly. Theſe People have Advantages of improving their Being to the nobleſt Purpoſes: and with the ſame Degree of Pains and Application, that furniſhes the poor Artificer a daily Pro-

Proviſion for himſelf, and his Family, they may become a Kind of beneficent Angels to their Fellow-Creatures, and enjoy themſelves, a Happineſs ſuperior to all Pleaſure.

It is a pretty Thought of Seneca, that as a Merchant, whoſe Goods are conſiderable, is more ſenſible of the Bleſſing of a fair Wind, and a ſafe Paſſage, than he that has only Ballaſt, or ſome coarſe Commodity in the Veſſel; ſo Life is differently enjoyed by Men, according to the different Freight of their Minds. Thoſe of indigent Fortunes are generally obliged to have their's too much filled, with an Attention to provide the low Neceſſaries of Life. Indeed Riches and Greatneſs are as ſtrong an Obſtacle as the other, to ſpending Life in Theory and Speculation: But it is, however nobler, and a more delightful Taſk to provide for the general Good of Multitudes, than for the Subſiſtence of a few Individuals. I ſpeak of what Riches might be: God knows, not of what they are.

The Rich, the Great, who act an insignificant Part in Life, are the most despicable Wretches of the whole Creation: While the poor, the mean, the despised Part of Mankind, who live up to the Height of their Capacity and Opportunities, are noble, venerable, and happy.

Is it not amazing, that Creatures so fond of Pre-eminence and Distinction, so biassed by Interest, so dazzled by Fortune, as all the Race of Men are, should so blindly trample under Foot the only true Advantages of Fortune? The only Pre-eminence, the only Honour, the highest Joy, the brightest Lustre, that all those gay Things, they pursue, could bestow upon them? Where is the Beauty to be found, that will choose to waste her Youth, where no Eye can behold her? Where is the Man of Wit that will sit down contented with his own Admiration, and lock up his Papers in a Chest for his own private Reading? Yet the covetous Man, as far as in him lies, conceals the Advantage he is fondest

of,

of, and puts himſelf, as much as poſſible, upon a Level with that Poverty, he deſpiſes. Good Heaven! That People ſhould not rather chooſe to lay hold on every honeſt Means, that can raiſe them into a Kind of ſuperior Being. Who would not go through Toil, and Pain, and Danger to attain ſo glorious a Pre-eminence, an Honour beyond the Olympic Crown of old. And yet it is but at the Expence of a little Openneſs of Heart, a little Thought and Contrivance, a little honeſt generous Induſtry in beſtowing properly, that a Man of Rank and Fortune may ſhine out like the Sun, and ſee a gay World flouriſhing under his cheerful Influence.

All theſe Things have been ſaid a hundred Times. The Miſer has been painted in all his unamiable Colours: and the Prodigal has had his Lecture too. But ſtill, methinks, there is a great deal wanting, and I do not know how to expreſs it. The indolent, the thoughtleſs People of Fortune, want to be put in Mind of their

own Importance. Some are ſo lazy, ſome ſo careleſs, and ſome even ſo humble, that they never once think of themſelves as having any Place to fill, or any Duty to perform, beyond the immediate Calls of domeſtic Life. Alas what a Miſtake is this! And what noble Opportunities do they neglect!

But what muſt People do? They muſt awaken in their Minds that Principle of Activity and Induſtry which is the Source of every Thing excellent and Praiſe-worthy. They ſhould exert themſelves in every Way, improve every Occaſion, employ every Moment. Let the Great ſurvey the whole Scene, the whole Sphere of their Influence, as the Maſter-Farmer, from a riſing Ground, overlooks the whole of his Eſtate. The labouring Hinds indeed are confined to a Spot: they have their daily Taſk appointed, and when that is done, may lay them down to Sleep without a further Care. But the Maſter muſt wake, muſt conſider and deliberate.

This Spot of Ground wants better Cultivation: That muſt be laid out to more Advantage: A Shade would be becoming here: In yonder Place I mean to lead the little Rivulet, that wanders near it, to refreſh thoſe parched Meadows. Thoſe Huſbandmen ſhould be encouraged: Theſe ſhould be rewarded.—A Word, a Look, a Geſture from a Superior, is of Importance. Thus might the Rich, the Great, the Powerful conſider in like Manner. "This Part of my Fortune will be nobly "employed in relieving the Miſerable: "That, in Works of public Generoſity: "So much in procuring the agreeable "Ornaments of Life: In this Manner I "may encourage the elegant Arts: By "this Way I may ſet off my own Cha-"racter to the beſt Advantage: And by "making myſelf beloved and reſpected, "I ſhall conſequently gain an honeſt In-"fluence over ſuch as may be bettered by "my good Example: My Advice, my "Approbation will be uſeful in ſuch a "Caſe: in *this* I may do Honour to my

" Country: in *that*"——Up and employ yourſelves, you who are lolling in eaſy Chairs, amuſing away your Lives over French Novels, waſting your Time in fruitleſs Theory, or your Fortunes in riotous Exceſſes. Remember, you have an important Part to act. It is in your own Choice whether you will be, the Figure in the Tapeſtry, the animated Chair or Flower-Pot, or the Hero that draws the whole Attention of the Theatre, and goes off with a general Plaudit.

ESSAY

ESSAY VII.

WITHOUT at all pretending to Criticiſm, it is almoſt impoſſible to read a Variety of Books, and not form ſome Reflexions on the Variety of Stile in which they are writ. One of the firſt and moſt obvious, to me, is, that the plaineſt and leaſt ornamented Stile is ever the moſt agreeable to that general Taſte, which is certainly the beſt Rule, by which an Author can form himſelf. Particular Ornaments will not more pleaſe ſome Fancies, than they will diſpleaſe others. The flowery epitheted Way of Writing wearies the Imagination, by preſenting it with a Multitude of wrong Objects, in Way of Simile and Illuſtration, before it has half informed the Underſtanding, of what was its main Purpoſe.

The

The human Mind has ſo long a Journey to take, in ſearch of Knowledge, that it grows peeviſh at being led out of the Way, every Minute, to look at Proſpects, or gather Daiſies. The original Uſe of Epithets was to paint Ideas ſtronger upon the Mind, by a Complication of little Circumſtances: but, I know not how, of late, they are grown into a Sort of unintelligible Language, that ſignifies nothing more to the ſlightly attentive Reader, than, that the Author has a Mind to be poetical; like thoſe Indian Alphabets, which firſt were the plain Repreſentation of ſenſible Objects, from thence grew into Hieroglyphics, and laſt of all, into a mere Cypher.

The common Sort of metaphorical Epithets is very diſagreeable. When we would indulge our Fancies with the Idea of a cool limpid running Stream, to have a Piece of Chryſtal thrown croſs one's Way is quite provoking. I remember two Lines, in a very good Poem, that often offended me,

—and

——and ſtrew
Her Silver Treſſes, in the Chryſtal Tide.

Would not the Image be more natural, and make leſs Clatter in one's Head, thus:

——and ſtrew
Her hoary Locks, wide floating o'er the Stream.

Gold and Jewels do not become the Muſe herſelf, half ſo well, as an elegant Simplicity. But elegant it muſt be, and noble, or elſe the Stile of Writing degenerates into mere chit-chat Converſation. Nor ſhould a Writer think it any Reſtraint, that he is obliged to attend to the minuteſt Strictneſs of Grammar: ſince whatever ſerves to make his Compoſition moſt clear and intelligible, contributes to the giving it the greateſt Beauty it can poſſibly have. For this Reaſon, too long Sentences, and the Intricacies of Parentheſes ought, by all Means, to be avoided, however the Sun-

Sun-like Genius of ſome Authors, may have gilded thoſe Clouds into Beauty.

This one Rule of Perſpicuity will hold good, for all Sorts of People, from thoſe of mere Buſineſs, to thoſe of abſolute Speculation. The next is, that Writers put no Conſtraint upon their natural Turn of Mind, which will always give a truer Spirit than is within the Reach of any Art. Yet often from an Admiration of that in others, which is utterly unſuitable to themſelves, they put on a Character in Writing, that is mighty difficult to ſupport throughout. The Affectation of Wit and Humour leads into that low Burleſque, which is, of all Dulneſs, the moſt diſagreeable. Unable to reach the true Sublime, they are willing to bring it down to their own Pitch. Hence ſpring ſuch Multitudes of Traveſties, Parodies, and ſuch like Perverſions of Paſſages really fine: When, if they can but preſent you with low, and often dirty Images, inſtead of ſuch

ſuch as are noble and beautiful, yet in ſuch a Manner, as ſtrongly to put you in Mind of the Difference, all the Way, they are greatly conceited of their own Ingenuity. Where any of theſe have real Humour in them, it muſt ariſe from ſome particular Occaſion: and is by no Means inherent in that Kind of Compoſition.

But while little Wits think, that lowering and debaſing the Sublime, is being witty, thoſe, who with an exalted Genius, have a ſportive Livelineſs of Temper, can find Means of ennobling their eaſieſt and lighteſt Compoſitions. Of all People Mr. Prior has ſucceeded the beſt, in this Way, if he had not, now and then, allowed his Pen too much Licence for the Demureneſs of the Muſe. As Homer's Dreams were the Dreams of Jupiter, ſo Prior's Gaieties are the Sportings of Apollo: and where he introduces his fabled Deities, in a mirthful Scene, it is not by depreſſing them to the Level of merry Mortals, but by employ-

employing (to uſe the Phraſe of an excellent modern Author) "a new Species "of the Sublime that has, hitherto, re-"ceived no Name."

There is a celebrated Paſſage in Longinus, in which he prefers, upon the whole, a Mixture of ſtriking Faults and Beauties, to the flat Correctneſs of an uncenſurable, laboured Author. One of the Books, which to thoſe, who for Want of Tranſlations, can know little of Iſocrates and Demoſthenes, has moſt convincingly proved the Juſtneſs of this Determination, is Dr. Barrow's Sermons, who ſeems moſt exactly to anſwer what Longinus ſays of the irreſiſtible Greek Orator. His Expreſſions are frequently ſingular, and though crowded together, are ſo poured out from the Abundance of one of the beſt Hearts, that the fineſt turned Periods are inſipid in Compariſon. His Genius too, whatever were the Littleneſſes of Language, in thoſe Days, was certainly poetical and noble: and

and his Imagination ſo warmed and delighted with the faireſt View of every Thing in the Scheme of Providence, that Religion wears, through every Page of his, its proper Grace.

ESSAY VIII.

TO enliven an Airing, the other Morning, Prior's Henry and Emma was read aloud, to the Company; and the different Sentiments they expreſt, upon it, determined me, to put down my own upon Paper, as that Poem has always been a Favourite with me, and yet wants, I think, a good deal of Explanation, and Excuſe.

The Tale is introduced, in a Way ſo much more intereſting, than one commonly meets with, in Paſtoral Dialogues; with Circumſtances of ſuch Tenderneſs and Delicacy, and Images ſo ſmiling and engaging, that one is concerned, before his Characters have ſaid a Word, to have them keep up to the Ideas, which partial Imagination had formed of each. That of Emma

is

is diſtinguiſhed by ſomething ſo peculiarly mild and affectionate, that if we do not attend to this, as her chief Characteriſtic, we ſhall be apt to be ſurprized at many of her moſt beautiful Sentiments, as too different from the common Ways of thinking, on ſuch Occaſions.

Emma ſuſceptible of ſoft Impreſſions, beyond what were to be wiſhed in a Character, were it ſet up for a general Pattern, her Soul entirely turned to thoſe tender Attachments, that are not inconſiſtent with ſtrict Virtue, had long been wooed with every irreſiſtible Art by an accompliſhed Youth, whoſe Virtues and Excellencies could not but diſcover themſelves, in ſuch a Space of Time, on a thouſand Occaſions. By the Characters given, on each Side, their Paſſion ſeems to have been grounded on a juſt Eſteem: and the known Truth and Goodneſs of Henry had produced in her Mind, ſuch an unlimited Confidence, that it was impoſſible ſhe could ſuſpect him of any Crime. To try her Conſtancy,

he

he accuſes himſelf, in the harſheſt Terms, as a Murderer: but it was eaſy for Emma's Heart to furniſh him with ſufficient Excuſes. The wild unſettled State of the Iſland, in thoſe early Times, torn by ſo many, and ſo fierce Factions, involved the Young and Brave, in perpetual Bloodſhed. What was called Valour in one Party, would, in the other, be branded as Murder. In thoſe Days, the vaſt Foreſts were filled with generous Outlaws: and the Brave mixt with the Vile, from a Likeneſs of Fortune, not of Crimes.

I have dwelt upon this, becauſe, at firſt Reading, it offended me to imagine, that Emma ſhould be ſo unmoved with a Suppoſition of her Lover's Guilt, and continue her Affection, when ſhe muſt have loſt her Eſteem. That Point, I think, is now cleared up: But I am extremely ſorry, that, to prevent all Scandal, Prior did not alter a few Lines, in the Anſwer ſhe makes him, to his open Declaration of Inconſtancy. In ſpite of all Prejudice, there is certainly

certainly a Want of all Spirit and Delicacy in it. If what he told her was Fact, he could not be faultleſs, nor could her Affection continue to be innocent. The ſame mild Benevolence to her Rival, might ſurely have been expreſt without the Extravagance of deſiring to attend them as a Servant. Permit me to inſert the Alteration here.

" Go then, while I, in hopeleſs Abſence
" prove
" By what I ſhall endure, how much I
" love."
This potent Beauty, this triumphant Fair,
This happy Object of our different Care,
Her ſhall my Thoughts, through various Life attend,
With all the Kindneſs of the fondeſt Friend:
Loved for thy Sake, howe'er her haughty Scorn
May triumph o'er me, as a Thing forlorn,

For

For her my warmeſt Wiſhes ſhall be made
And Heav'n implored for Bleſſings on her Head.
O may ſhe never feel a Pain, like mine!
Never—for then a double Guilt were thine.
Here muſt I ſtay: Like Thought, were Actions free
No Wrongs, no Hardſhips ſhould divorce from Thee
Thy Emma,—not a Rival's Company.
But wandering Thoughts, and anxious Cares are now
All that a rigid Virtue will allow.

Go happy then, forget the Wretch you leave,
Nor for a Woman's Weakneſs vainly grieve.
Thy Fate decreed Thee falſe: the ſame Decree
Entailed a hopeleſs Conſtancy on me.

The few following Lines, in the ſame Speech, are ſo eaſily adapted to theſe, that the

the Change in them, is not worth mentioning.

There is ſomething infinitely beautiful in all the tender Paſſages of this Poet. He has the Art of repreſenting all the Softneſs of the Paſſion, without any of its Madneſs. Other Writers raiſe their Expreſſions, with ſuch Hyperboles, as are a Profanation of much nobler Sentiments. Methinks Softneſs and Tenderneſs are the only Characteriſtics of a mortal Love. The Strains of Adoration ill become Anacreon's Lyre; and are ill addreſt to human Imperfection. Thoſe imagined everlaſting Attachments, that rebel againſt Mortality; thoſe infinite Ideas, that graſp at all Excellence, in one finite Object, are fatal Abſurdities, that have both their Guilt and Puniſhment.

This Kind of Sentiment is quite unneceſſary: we may ſurvey thoſe we love, ſurrounded with all the Frailties and Imperfections of human Nature, and yet be par-

tial to these Imperfections, as we are to our own. Pity does but endear the tender Tie, where it is not incompatible with Esteem. The Pleasures of giving and receiving, from the dear Object of Affection, mutual Protection, Comfort and Relief, are the Joys that we are formed most sensible of, as such a Disposition was, in our present Situation, most necessary for the Preservation, and Happiness of Society.

The Expressions of this Kind of Sentiment are, on the other Hand, as offensively misused, when applied to sacred Subjects, as they too often are by the soft Enthusiasm of constitutional Pietists. Of human Love, Kindness, Compassion, mutual Care, mutual Assistance, mutual Forgiveness of a thousand little Blemishes and Errors, are necessary Ingredients, have their Merit, and their Reward. All that refined Caprice, that shows its Kindness, like Alicia in Jane Shore,

"In

" In everlaſting Wailings, and Com-
" plainings,"

is as contrary to this Syſtem, as it is to the Happineſs of whoever is honoured by its Perſecution; and proceeds from a Failure, in Point of Confidence, which, when once the Honour of a Character, juſtly eſteemed worthy, is ſeriouſly engaged, ſhould remain unſhaken as a Rock. This is prettily expreſt, by Prior's Celia,

Reading thy Verſe, who heeds, ſaid I,
If here, or there, his Glances flew:
O free for ever be his Eye,
Whoſe Heart to me is ever true.

Another great, as great a Contradiction to the amiable Kind of Temper, that Prior deſcribes, is that violent Deteſtation upon even juſt Cauſe of Offence, which ſo much too often verifies the Poet's Expreſſion,

Heaven has no Curſe, like Love to Hatred turn'd,
Nor Hell a Fury, like a Woman ſcorn'd.

The Hatred of Anger can juſtly proceed only from Injury. Real, premeditated Injury can proceed from no ſuch Character, as could ever be the Object of a well-placed Love: and therefore, in this laſt, the Injury retaliates on a Perſon's own miſtaken Choice: who has therefore no more Reaſon to be angry with the other, for not acting up to an ideal Perfection, than to be diſpleaſed at any other Inſtance of wrong Behaviour in thoſe, who never were the Objects of any juſt Partiality.

But if the Character be mixt, faulty indeed, but not totally bad, Pity methinks ſhould gladly take hold on the Occaſion, and baniſh, at once, all Bitterneſs of Reſentment. Religion itſelf forbids the Spirit of uncharitable Anger and Revenge. When there has ever been a real Affection, it can never,

never, I fancy, be ſo rooted out, as to give place to thoſe hateful Emotions.

Whoever then yield up their Minds to theſe Exceſſes, muſt confeſs their former Partiality to have been founded merely in Pride, Vanity, and Selfiſhneſs: for Kindneſs and Benevolence will never ceaſe to exiſt, whilſt their Objects remain, in any Degree unchanged. If thoſe Objects were only our dear ſelves, every Diſappointment of our Pride, Intereſt, and Vanity will wound us to the Heart. But if our Thoughts had a more generous Aim, if the Happineſs of one dearer than ourſelves, was the Center of our Wiſhes, we ſhall joyfully acquieſce in any Means, by which that Happineſs may be attained, laying ourſelves entirely out of the Caſe: and ſhould the Injury to us, be ever ſo grievous, we ſhall only wiſh for them, with the ſame diſintereſted Ardour, Ariſtides did for the Athenians, who had baniſhed him, that the Time may never come, when they ſhall repent it.

ESSAY IX.

I KNOW nothing more common, and almoſt unavoidable, than the Diſpoſition of cenſuring thoſe Manners and Inclinations in others, which we are ſenſible would, in our own Tempers be faulty, or which lie croſs to the Bent of our natural Humours. Yet I am perſuaded, in many of theſe Inſtances, were we to make but common Allowances for the Difference of Conſtitution, of Situation, of Knowledge, and of Perception, we ſhould find, according to a good-natured French ſaying, that *Tout le Monde a Raiſon.*

That Tenderneſs, which we feel for a true Friend, is, in ſome Minds, ſo inſeparably blended with every Idea, that the dearer half of every Enjoyment is liable

to

to be torn away at once, and the Stroke of a Moment ſhall caſt its Gloom over the longeſt Years of Life. Kindneſs and Gratitude, the very Laws of Conſtancy, and the Frame of human Nature, ſeem to exact of us this melancholy Return, for all that refined and ſuperior Happineſs, which in ſuch an Union, we have enjoyed.

I cannot help imagining however, that there may be a good deal of Reaſon on the contrary Side: and as one never is ſo ſenſible of the Force of Reaſon, as when it is heightened by the Eloquence of ſome preſent Feeling; ſo this came moſt ſtrongly into my Head, during ſome ſolitary Hours of Illneſs, that very lately put me in Mind of ſuch an eternal Separation from my Friends. The Enjoyments of Life are what, I believe, all Perſons of ſerious Thought, would eaſily reſign for themſelves, when they are ſure, at the ſame Time, to be freed from its Diſquiets. But, to think that we may carry away with us, into the Grave, all the Joy and Satisfac-

tion of thoſe, to whom we ever wiſh the moſt; and leave them behind us, in a World where every Support is wanting, entirely deſtitute of any (of any ſuch I mean, as the ordinary Methods of Providence have appointed) is the only Reflection, which, at ſuch a Moment, can diſturb the Compoſure of an innocent and religious Mind.

I do not know how far the Pride of giving Pain may extend, in ſome People, but for myſelf I proteſt, that as earneſtly as I wiſh to be remembered with a kind Eſteem, I could not bear the Thought of that Remembrance being a painful one. For this Reaſon, I was ſummoning up, in my Mind, all that might be alledged, for what I uſed to call Lightneſs of Temper, and found it much more, than I had imagined.

Indeed, if the Perſons we lament, were truly dear to us, we ought, for their Sakes, to reſtrain that immoderate Sorrow, which,

which, if they could behold it, we are ſure, that it would be with the utmoſt Concern. This, however, is an Argument, that will by no Means hold, in all Caſes: but there are others more general. I will not argue that ſo ſhort a Life, as ours, ſeems to contradict the Idea of eternal Attachments: becauſe I cannot help flattering myſelf that they may be continued, and improved through every future State of Being. But that they ought to be ſo moderated, as to contradict no Purpoſe of the State, we are at preſent placed in, is a Truth, that will ſcarcely be denied. The Inferiority of our Station, the Frailty and Imperfection of our Nature, make Submiſſion to unerring Wiſdom, one of our firſt Duties: and how do we ſet ourſelves up, in Oppoſition to it, when upon its withdrawing any one Bleſſing, however kindly to us, we ſtubbornly determine to ſhut our Minds againſt every other, which it indulgently continues!

Yet, after all theſe Conſiderations, the Characters of Arachne and Maria ſtill ſurpaſs me, though they no longer give me the Diſguſt they uſed to do. To hear them talk, with the greateſt good Nature of any preſent Object of Compaſſion, otherwiſe ever ſo indifferent to them: to ſee how really they are affected by every little Inſtance of Kindneſs, and how happy they are in every trifling Amuſement, one would imagine them extremely ſuſceptible of Impreſſions. But then, in the Midſt of a gay Converſation, to hear them run over, without the leaſt Emotion, a long Liſt of once intimate Friends, and then go on as earneſtly about Trifles, as if ſuch People had never been.—It is impoſſible not to wonder at their happy Conſtitutions, and eternal Flow of Spirits. When I tell you, I really eſteem theſe Women, ſhall I be reckoned ſevere, if I ſay they are ingenious, without Parts, and good humoured, without Sentiments?

Theagenes is ſcarcely leſs happy, in his Frame of Mind, but more ſo, in his Strength of Reaſon. His Genius is the moſt extenſive, his Imagination the moſt flowery that can be: and theſe ſupply perpetual Employments for his Mind, diverting it from too deep an Attention to melancholy Subjects. His Temper is really generous and benevolent: this makes him intereſted in every Body's Welfare, that comes within his Reach: and ſuch an Activity of Mind is the ſureſt Food of Cheerfulneſs. As ſome People are peculiarly turned to amuſe themſelves with the Oddneſſes and Deformities of Natures, Theagenes has an Eye for its Beauties only. His Speculations wander over the great Objects of the Univerſe, and find ſomething curious, in the Detail even of mechanic Arts. In Characters, he often errs on the favourable Side; and by this Means ſometimes loſes, too much, the Diſtinction of different Kinds of Merit, and ſubjects himſelf to a friendly Laugh. As he looks upon the World, with a philoſophic,

and a grateful Eye, he can find ſomething endearing, in whatever Part of it he is placed; like a ſtrong Plant, that will take Root and flouriſh, in every Soil. When one Set of Acquaintance is ſwept away, by Time, his ſociable Temper unites itſelf with the next, he falls into; and is to be conſidered, in this View, like a Drop of Water, which, though ſeparated from its native Stream, yet naturally blends with any other Maſs of the ſame Element, while diſunited it would loſe its Uſe, and its very Being.

ESSAY

ESSAY X.

IT is a reigning Maxim, through all the Works of Epictetus, that every Body may be happy, if they pleaſe: and the Deſire of being happy, is but in other Words, the Definition of ſuch a virtuous and reaſonable Self-Love, as was originally implanted in us, by the Author of our Nature, for innumerable wiſe and gracious Purpoſes. No Part of our Conſtitution was given us, without important Reaſon: and therefore it were Folly to ſuppoſe this of ſo eſſential a one as Self-Love: but how often it errs, in its Aim, and in its Degree, there needs no Inſtance to prove; nor that when it does ſo, it is of all other Principles the moſt miſchievous, as it is ever the moſt active.

Violent

Violent Declamations, either for, or againſt any Thing of the great Frame of Nature, ſerve but to ſhew an injudicious Eloquence, which by proving too much, in Effect proves abſolutely nothing. Even Paſſion may be improved into Merit: and Virtues themſelves may deviate into very blameable Errors. Unbiaſſed Reaſon, if ſuch a Thing there be, in this mixt State of human Nature, ſurveys both Sides at once, and teaches us, to moderate our Opinions, to draw the proper Advantages, from every Circumſtance, and carefully to guard againſt all its Dangers.

The ſame Principle of Self-Love, that adds new Fire and Strength to every Paſſion, when the looſe Rein is given up to Fancy, at other Times checks our Indulgence of thoſe Paſſions, and Purſuits, by making us reflect on the Danger, and Pain, that attends them. The ſame Tie that ſo cloſely binds us down to our own Intereſt, makes us ſympathize, in the Fortunes of our Fellow Creatures. By Self-Love we learn

learn to pity in others, what we dread, or fear for ourſelves. In this Balance we weigh their Diſtreſſes with our own: and what Self-Love has ſhown us, under the Name of ſuch, to ourſelves, we ſhall always ſuppoſe the ſame to every one elſe, and kindly commiſerate the Sorrows we have felt.

Self-Love endears Virtue to us, by the Tenderneſs it gives us, for whatever Degree of it we perceive in ourſelves: and in the ſame Way, makes us look with a peculiar Charity on thoſe, whoſe Faults are of the ſame Kind with ours. Every Body has, I believe, a favourite Virtue, and a favoured Weakneſs, which being firſt uſed to in themſelves, they are ſure to give Quarter and Applauſe to, in every one elſe. By this Partiality, particular Friendſhips are generally determined.

There is a lower Degree of it, which would be quite ridiculous, if that too had not its valuable Uſe in connecting human Kind together. As we grow any Way acquainted

quainted with People, though ſometimes it is only by Character, ſometimes even by ſome Circumſtance of no more Signification, than having ſat at the ſame Table; received, or paid ſome trifling Mark of Civility, nay even having it to ſay, that we have ſeen them, we aſſume a Kind of Property in them. Such is the Importance, which the leaſt Connection, with our dear ſelves, can give to whatever we pleaſe, that if we have ſeen People, but one ſingle Time, it makes often a wide Difference in our Way of attending to what is ſaid about them. Recollect but any Converſation you have been in, where Perſons though of very little Conſequence, have been talked of, and I dare ſay you may remember, that two or three of the Company, immediately, fell to recollecting ſuch idle Circumſtances in their Knowledge of them, as could receive no Value, but from that Knowledge itſelf.

This Diſpoſition, I think, ſhows how much we were intended to mix in Life: and

and it muſt be a ſtrong Reaſon, that will draw the ſame Advantages for Practice, from the enlarged Views, given by Reading and Speculation, which even the commoneſt Underſtandings are fitted to receive, from their natural Conſtitution. If theſe are neglected, we fall into a thouſand Faults, of which every one carries its own Puniſhment along with it. People who confine themſelves ſtrictly, to a ſmall Circle of Acquaintance, are in great Danger of contracting a Narrowneſs of Mind: while thoſe, who enter freely into Society, gain by it ſuch an Eaſe, and Openneſs of Temper, as makes them look upon every Intereſt, and Pleaſure, to be, in ſome Degree, their own.

The Great, who live immured, as it were, within the Incloſures of their vaſt Poſſeſſions, look upon thoſe of a lower Rank, as Inhabitants of a diſtant World from themſelves. If ever they have any Thing to do with them, it is Matter of Conſtraint, and Uneaſineſs, and therefore never

never can be done with a good Grace. Their Sentiments and Amuſements, are ſomething delicate and myſterious, that the Vulgar are not ſuppoſed capable of apprehending, but are to be kept at an awful Diſtance, which, if ever they leave, it is inſufferable Intruſion.

All diſtinct Sets of People are apt to conſider themſelves as ſeparate from the reſt of Mankind. Hence the perpetual Enmities and Prejudices of different Profeſſions: Hence the continual Oppoſition of Parties, Sects, and Ages: Hence the general Cenſures, thrown at Random, on all. When once what we have cenſured and laughed at, comes to be our own Caſe, we learn to make thoſe reaſonable Allowances, that, before, we never ſo much as thought of.

A Beauty, that has been ſeverely uſed by the Small-Pox, learns to eſteem People, for ſomething more than the Perſon. A miſrepreſented Character can allow a great

great deal for the Uncharitableneſs of People's Opinions, and think mildly of a blemiſhed one. The Age, which at fifteen, ſeemed almoſt Antediluvian, grows ſtrangely ſupportable, as we approach it: and Lyſis, in an airy Dreſs, no longer ridicules People that go without Hoods, after thirty.—I grow trifling. This Subject of Self-Love, affords Matter of ſerious Reflection and Gratitude. It is ſurely one of the greateſt Marks of infinite Wiſdom, that what, at firſt Sight, may ſeem only to regard ourſelves, is one of the ſtrongeſt Ties to ſocial Virtue: and that the very Attention to others, which ſhould ſeem moſt contrary to our firſt Notions of Self-Love, is indeed, the trueſt Support, and moſt rational Purſuit of it, and which alone can preſerve it from degenerating, into miſerable Weakneſs and Folly.

Man, like the gen'rous Vine, ſupported lives,
The Strength he gains is from the Embrace he gives.

On

On their own Axis, as the Planets run,
Yet make at once, their Circle round the Sun,
So two conſiſtent Motions act the Soul,
And one regards itſelf, and one the whole.
Thus God and Nature linked the general Frame,
And bad Self-love, and Social be the ſame. POPE.

ESSAY XI.

I WAS making a Viſit the other Day, to People, that paſs for what are called your very ſenſible clever Folks. They have a large Family of Children, of whom they ſeem fond without Indulgence: *and to be ſure they educate them mighty well.* Who is more capable of doing it? They are prudent, have good Senſe, and know a great deal of the World: but alas, it is this Knowledge of the World, as they call it, that ſpoils every Thing. "Come hi-"ther, my Dear," (ſaid the Lady of the Houſe to a little Girl about five Years old, who was crying to go out of the Room almoſt as ſoon as ſhe came in) "Come hi-"ther Lucy: Look ye my Dear, if you "will behave yourſelf prettily, and go and "talk to all the Company, Papa will

"give

" give you a fine new Doll To-morrow."— This you may be ſure, ſtopt the Crying for the preſent. But what will be the Effect of it? Every Time Miſs Lucy wants a new Play-thing, ſhe has only to miſbehave herſelf, and ſhe is ſure of being bribed into good Humour again. Thus by an Exceſs of good Management in her Mamma, the little Gipſy will be taught to be artful and peeviſh, at an Age, whoſe greateſt Ornament is Innocence and good Humour.

Two or three Inſtances more, of the ſame Kind of Prudence, had quite awakened my Sincerity, and I could not forbear ſpeaking of it, with the Freedom of an old Acquaintance, as ſoon as the more formal Part of the Circle was diſperſed. " My " Dear" (replied Prudentia, with a compaſſionate Kind of Smile) " you have lived " in the Clouds, all your Days, and I am " ſorry to ſee you are not out of them yet. " For my Part, who have long been ſen- " ſible, that it is upon this Earth, and not " up in the Air, that I am to act my Part

" in

" in Life, I confeſs, nothing ſeems more " natural to me, than that Children ſhould " be taught to follow the ſame Motive, by " which they are ſure to be actuated all " the reſt of their Lives."—Can you poſſibly mean ſo low a Motive as Intereſt? ſaid I.—" I certainly do. For as low as " you think it, you muſt be ſenſible, if " you reflect a Moment, that it is what " we all of us purſue. Thoſe, who give " up their Happineſs, in the preſent State, " with the moſt diſintereſted Air, do it " only to intitle themſelves to the Bleſſings " of a future one."

Suppoſing that this was the Caſe, interrupted I, the Nature of the Rewards, in theſe two Inſtances is ſo very different, that it would hinder you from drawing any Inferences from them, in Favour of your own Scheme. If the Greatneſs, or Gaieties of this World were to be our Recompence, I ſhould think, that to reward a Child with a Doll or a Hobby-horſe, were framing its Mind to proper Expecta-

tions

tions and Deſires, but—will you let me talk a little upon Subjects, that are certainly above my Reach?—O by all Means, anſwered Prudentia, Clemene was not to call upon me till eight, and I ſhall be mighty glad to hear your Romance of Education, in the mean Time. I dare ſay it will be pretty: but you will find it a mere Romance, I am perſuaded, ten Years hence, when you have a Family of your own—Well, be that as it will: you have given me Leave to talk, and this is all I have to do at preſent.

I was going to ſay, continued I, that I cannot help imagining, that a great Part of our Happineſs, in a future State, may ariſe from a Senſe of *Right*, abſtractedly from all other Conſiderations. That, at leaſt, as much of it will proceed from the Thought, of having acted agreeably to the infallible Will of the moſt perfect of Beings, as from that of having deſerved the Favour of the Lord of the Univerſe, and from the Hopes of any Happineſs,

which

which infinite Goodneſs and Power may beſtow on us. In ſhort it ſeems to me, as if to contribute, each in our inferior Way, to the Order and Beauty of the Univerſe, was at once the nobleſt, and the juſteſt Motive, and the higheſt Reward of Goodneſs.

"Lucia is not old enough to enter into "all theſe abſtracted Reaſonings," ſaid Prudentia. "In our World, we muſt treat "Children, as Children, and convince "them by their Senſes, in Default of "their Judgments. I do not know what "People may do in Fairy Land. I ſup-"poſe, if you had a Son you would ex-"pect, he ſhould be Divinity Profeſſor "at five Years old: but I am afraid, "Lucy would not be at all a fit Wife for "him."

Look ye, ſaid I, you ſhall not laugh me out of my Argument: and ſo arm yourſelf with Patience, and hear me out. Your Suppoſition is an excellent good one: but I am afraid, I ſhall be leſs miſtaken, in ſup-

poſing, that a Child, who has been taught no other End in behaving itſelf well, than the gaining ſome favourite Point, or ſome darling Toy, will never make a diſintereſted Miniſter, will never regard the Reality of Virtue, and will be ready to throw off even the Appearance of it, when it is contradictory to Intereſt.

"But muſt one never give a poor Child "any Encouragement then?" cried Prudentia.

You miſtake me entirely, ſaid I, let good Behaviour be always attended by Reward; but you make it the Conſequence of bad Behaviour. As for the particular Rewards of Toys and Sugar-Plumbs, I confeſs myſelf, in general, no great Friend to them. The Approbation of Friends is a better Incentive to act right; and gives, even to ſuch Children, a Pleaſure of a much higher Kind. Theſe ſhould be mixed, however, in a proper Degree: and certainly even the laſt ought not to be too much inſiſted on. The Notion of doing

right, for the Sake of doing right, ſhould be gently inculcated, and ſtrengthened by Degrees, as they advance in Age, and Underſtanding. This will ſettle, in Time, into a firm and ſtedfaſt Rightneſs of Mind, which Intereſt ſhall never bias, which Adverſity ſhall never ſhake, which Proſperity ſhall never enervate. From hence will proceed a calm and even Cheerfulneſs of Temper, a regular and uniform Conduct, that ſhall make them for ever happy in themſelves, and reſpected by others. Not the wild Gaiety of one Hour, damped by uneaſy Reflections, the next: Not a perpetual Diſpute, between Reaſon and Paſſion, which makes People good by Fits and Starts only. Miſerable is the State of theſe: and yet perhaps it is almoſt always the Effect of their not knowing, from the firſt, what End to aim at. Intereſt and Ambition attract them, by a thouſand glittering Temptations: and yet, in ſpite of all theſe, in the Midſt of their Purſuit, they feel themſelves often checked by the ſecret Monitor in the Heart, who tells

them, we were formed for ſomething nobler than Greatneſs, and that, neither Riches, nor Pleaſures are the chief End of Life.

But what is this nobler End? Perhaps it is the Applauſe of Men, the Immortality, which Fame beſtows, or at leaſt, the Pleaſure of being well looked on, and eſteemed by the People among whom we live.—Fatal Imagination! Source of wild and miſchievous Exploits, of Wars and Deſolations: and, in leſs noble Minds, the Origin of Hypocriſy, and every hateful Deceit. To look upon the Reſpect and Admiration of Men, as the ultimate End of Life, is, perhaps, one of the moſt dangerous Errors, into which we can fall. While it is the Perfection of a Character to pay a proper Regard to it, to rejoice in it as the amiable Attendant of real Virtue: but to be willing to ſacrifice the faireſt Appearance, to what is really right: and bear the Contempt of Mankind, rather than not deſerve their Eſteem.

ESSAY XII.

LORD BACON has an Eſſay upon Cunning, that if it falls into wrong Hands, is more likely to teach People Sleights and Devices, than to furniſh a Warning againſt them. And yet the Eſſay is, in itſelf, excellent: but methinks it were Time well beſtowed to make a juſt Diſtinction between Cunning and Prudence, a blameable Artfulneſs, and a laudable Dexterity. To fix the Bounds of theſe two Borderers, and determine the nice Difference,

" Where ends the Virtue, or begins the
" Vice."

to exerciſe the Authority of ſuperior Reaſon and Underſtanding, to make uſe of their lawful Advantages, can ſurely be no

Fault. On the contrary, it is making the beſt of our Nature, and employing Faculties that were not intended to lie idle. It is by Reaſon and Underſtanding, that human Kind are ſuperior to Brutes of infinitely greater Strength and Force of Body, and the ſame Sort of Difference ſubſiſts among Men. A brutal *Nature* is to be conſidered in the ſame Light, whether the Animal, it governs, go upon two Legs or four, only in our Behaviour towards the Brutes of our own Kind, we have this additional Conſideration, that there is, at the ſame Time, a Mixture of ſomething divine and excellent in every human Soul, which claims ſtrongly our Aſſiſtance, in ſubduing that worſe half, ſo prevalent in the Many. Thus, thoſe who by Wiſdom lead others leſs wiſe to act wiſely, not only make them, as inferior Natures, ſubſervient to excellent Purpoſes, but, at the ſame Time, do them a real and important Good, and raiſe them above what they were. When, by innocent Arts, we ſoothe an uneaſy Temper: when, by ſuſpending the Impetuoſity

tuoſity of a Perſon's Paſſion, we give him Leiſure to recall his Reaſon, we do but free him from the worſt of Tyrants, and defend the good and reaſonable Man, within him, from the haſty Influence of the Madman.

But to do Evil, that Good may come of it, nothing can ever make allowable. The Moment we deviate from Truth and Integrity, our very beſt Intentions are all poiſoned and perverted.

To learn what we can, by an acute Obſervation of the Countenances and Manners of thoſe with whom we are concerned, is certainly a very blameleſs Point of Wiſdom. To pry into their ſecret Thoughts, unintereſted, and only to betray them, is the Baſeneſs of hearkening at Doors, and looking in at Windows.

The cunningly preventing Objections to any Thing, we have a mind ſhould ſucceed, by unfairly withdrawing the Atten-

tion of Perſons from it, can only be allowable, in Caſes of great Exigence, or in abſolute Trifles. Mere Humour is a Thing, that we are at Liberty to controul and guide, in what Way we pleaſe: but when the Caſe is of Importance, we are ſcarcely fit Judges, if it touches ourſelves, whether we are at Liberty to deceive another, to what, we may think, ever ſo good an End. If it is a Perſon, over whom we have any Authority, the Caſe is ſomewhat clearer. Madneſs and Folly we have a Right to govern, founded in the utter Incapacity of thoſe, who are thus governed: and the Point is indiſputable, that Children may be cheated into Health, with a ſugared Potion; and that to ſteal away the Sword of a diſtracted Perſon, or humour his Frenzy, till we have ſecured him, is no Theft nor Deceit.

But to ſurpriſe any Perſon's Reaſon is utterly unjuſtifiable: and be the End we propoſe ever ſo good, the Means is moſt deteſtable. If People will not make a right

Uſe

Uſe of Leiſure and Reflection, their Fault is great: but if we do not allow them both, ours is much greater.

All Hypocriſy is hateful and deſpicable: but there certainly are infinite Caſes, where others have no Right to know our private Thoughts and Reſolutions. Reſerve is always allowable. Where we go a Step farther, it is accompanied with a Kind of Shame that is ſufficient to inſtruct us. Yet ſometimes, to be ſure, we may put on an Appearance of ſomething better than we are, as ſhowing a Diſdain of our preſent Imperfections, and provided we put this on, with a real Intention and Aim of riſing to the Mark we have ſet. But any Appearance *contrary* to what we are in our Hearts and Wiſhes, is vile.

Once again: People's Humours we may, nay ought to ſoothe and wind, and govern, as we beſt can: for Humour is the Childiſhneſs of the Mind: Reaſon its Maturity, and Children ought to ſubmit to the Di-

rection of grown Persons. These are the little Arts that humanize Society, and give it a pleasing and a gentle Air. But to work upon People's Weaknesses, to take Advantage of their Simplicity, to side with their Passions, for our own Purposes—this is that monstrous Policy, which is the Wisdom of this World, and the Foolishness of a better.

To introduce any perplexing Subject in the easiest Manner, provided our Intention be a good one, is but using fit Means to a laudable End. But let all have a Care how they grow too fond of their own Ingenuity and Dexterity, in managing even laudable Undertakings: the Step is too easy to a low Sort of Cunning, that is as far from the true Sublime of Virtue, as any Species of false Wit is from the true Sublime in Writing.

Most Comedies are very pernicious in this Way. They turn upon a thousand little Stratagems and Intrigues, that even when

when they are innocent tend ſtrangely to corrupt the amiable Simplicity of an honeſt Mind.

True Taſte in every Thing is Plainneſs and Simplicity, the leaſt Deviation from Nature that is poſſible; for that is very conſiſtent with the higheſt Improvement of it. Buildings, Gardens, Statues, Pictures, Writings of all Sorts come within this Rule, and it holds full as ſtrongly in Character and Behaviour. It is the Saying of a very excellent Author, that the true Art of Converſation, if any Body can hit it, ſeems to be this, an appearing Freedom and Openneſs, with a reſolute Reſervedneſs as little appearing as is poſſible. I ſtumbled at it at firſt: but upon Conſideration I muſt ſuppoſe him, and from what goes before it ſeems moſt probable, to mean by Reſervedneſs, a ſtrict Watch over ourſelves, nor to be led into ſaying any Thing improper, or that can be of the leaſt Harm to others, and this may moſt allowably be tempered with ſuch a winning Carriage,

and ſo eaſy a good Humour, as ſhall take off from the Height of Virtue and Diſcretion all Appearance of Stiffneſs and Moroſeneſs.

To inſinuate Inſtructions in a pleaſing Way, to introduce uſeful Subjects by unaffected Tranſitions, and to adorn Truth with a Mixture of pleaſing Fictions, is the higheſt Merit of Converſation, and has nothing to do with Cunning. To watch for a favourable Opportunity of doing People good, or reclaiming them from ſome Error——who ever complained of being ſo over-reached?

ESSAY XIII.

I Do not know whether it is a pragmatical Diſpoſition, or whether it is the Effect of a happy Inclination to hope, in ſpite of all Diſcouragements; but for my Part, I cannot abide to hear People in a deſponding Way, give up every Attempt in which they cannot thoroughly ſucceed. It is, generally too, the beſt and wiſeſt Sort of People, and who would therefore be the moſt likely to ſucceed in ſome Degree, that by carrying their Wiſhes of Succeſs too far, and finding it impoſſible to attain them, in their full Extent, ſit down in a uſeleſs Deſpair and moralize upon the World: which, becauſe it is too bad to be completely reformed by them, they diſdain to mend as far as they might.

Thus

Thus the beſt and moſt uſeful Deſigns are the ſooneſt diſcouraged, while thoſe of the Wicked and the Trifling are purſued Day after Day: The one too violent to be checked by any Conſideration, that would oppoſe the ruling Paſſion: the others too thoughtleſs to attend to any Difficulties, are continually weaving one Web after another out of their idle Imaginations, forgetful of all that have been bruſhed away, and thinking themſelves well rewarded, if they can catch a few worthleſs Flies, the Vanities and Amuſements of Life.

There is ſomething quite grievous in this to a Mind full of Spirit and Activity, that thinks it glorious, at leaſt to ſtruggle in the Cauſe of Virtue, though ever ſo ſure to be overpowered. But this is by no Means the Caſe; every Effort does ſomething, whether enough to be perceived, at the Moment, or not, is very little material: ſince in Time it will certainly have its due Effect, and whether that be ſoon enough for our Pride to be flattered by

by it, or not, is a Conſideration, which truly generous Minds ſhould overlook. They will, indeed, go on with leſs Alacrity and Satisfaction; but Eaſe and Pleaſure are, at beſt, but the ſecondary Ends of our Being, in ſuch a State of Trial as this Life. If, therefore, we do but our Duty here, we may truſt our Reward to Futurity: and we ſhould never urge the Difficulties we meet with, as any Objection to the main Buſineſs of our Life, which would by no Means be free from Uneaſineſs, even ſhould we neglect our Duty.

But, after all, what are theſe ſo terrible Difficulties of which People ſo heavily complain? Ours is not, with all its Faults, an Age, or Country of Perſecution or Tyranny: People's Lives and Fortunes are ſecure; their Virtues involve them in no Danger, and though very poſſibly they may hinder them from riſing in the World, yet though ever ſo openly and ſtrenuouſly perſiſted in, they can do them no great Damage. The utmoſt they can ſuffer is a little

a little Contradiction, a little Chagrin, the Vexation of ſeeing many good Endeavours turn out to but little good Purpoſe, the Uneaſineſs of living amongſt a Mixture of People little ſuited to their better Turn of Mind, and to whom they cannot do ſo much Good, as they would. But is this a Reaſon why they ſhould chuſe to do none at all? Will the World be the better for all the good People, that are in it, running to hide themſelves in Deſerts and Solitudes? If it is not, what then is this ſudden Retirement, but an idle and ſelfiſh Purſuit of their own indolent Inclinations? Does the induſtrious Planter forbear his Toil, becauſe he expects not to enjoy the Shade of thoſe flouriſhing Oaks, that will ſpring from his Acorns? Is he diſcouraged by the Fear, or Frequency of Blights? Does he at once declare, that all the young Trees are degenerate, and no good to be hoped from them? The worſe the World is, the more Need it has of good People's trying to mend it: and ſhould they be ever ſo unſucceſsful, in Regard to themſelves,

ſelves, at leaſt, they have not loſt their Pains. Meanly indeed do they betray the Cauſe of Virtue, if they, its only Friends, ſuffer themſelves to be overcome by ſo weak Enemies as Spleen and Indolence. Of all People they have the leaſt Cauſe to deſpond: They, who purſue the nobleſt End, by the faireſt Means, they who are ſure of being in the Right, they who are ſure to have the beſt Applauſe for it, they who can doubt of nothing, but that their preſent Fancy may not be gratified in ſeeing an immediate Succeſs of their Endeavours; and this they need not doubt about neither, ſince they ought not to think of it at all.

If ſometimes ſuch a glorious Inſtance of Succeſs appears, this ought no more to miſlead their Hopes, than the Notion of a magical Wand, that raiſes Palaces and Gardens in an Inſtant, ſhould make People diſdain to cultivate their Country, by the ſlow and vulgar Methods of Planting and Building. Inconveniencies that cannot

not be removed may be palliated at leaſt. The firſt who formed Habitations to defend them from the Cold, were certainly much wiſer than if they had ſat down and piteouſly lamented thoſe Inclemencies of the Weather, which none of their Complaints could alter, but againſt which their Induſtry could eaſily ſecure them.

From this reſtleſs Activity in the Mind of Man, this buſy Hope for every ſpringing up in his Heart, this Notion of bettering every Situation, and never reſting contented while he can aſpire to any Thing further, all thoſe Improvements, which form half the Enjoyment of civil Life, have ariſen. But with them many Errors have ſhot forward too: and if the more delicate Flowers of Virtue ſhould be left to ſicken and decay in their offenſive Shade, the World will ſoon be over-run with the moſt noxious Weeds.

ESSAY XIV.

AMONG thoſe Studies, which are uſually recommended to young People, there are few that might be improved to better Uſes than Geography. I mean by this, indeed, not a bare Acquaintance with the Outlines of a Map, but ſome general Knowledge of the People who inhabit this our Globe: not their Situation only, but their Hiſtory and Manners. It may perhaps be objected, that the Title, which I have given to this Study, belongs to a Subject much more bounded, than the Definition, which I have ſince been making of it; but I think it may very well include a general Knowledge of Hiſtory, as extended to all Parts of the habitable Globe, though a more particular Application to the Hiſtories of thoſe few People, who

who have made themſelves very remarkable on it, may belong to a different Science.

It is not only the Error of the Peaſant Boy, who imagines there is no habitable Land, beyond thoſe Mountains, that incloſe his native Valley, but of many more, that we have to guard againſt, and of much more important Tendency. How the Idea of Greatneſs and Superiority vaniſh in a Moment, at the unrolling a large Map of the World, where we ſee England itſelf, make ſo inconſiderable a Figure! Let our Thoughts be never ſo ſtrongly attached to any particular Place, in this inconſiderable Spot, it muſt give us a Moment's Reflection, upon the Inſignificance of all thoſe Cares, that center in ſo imperceptible a Point! Innumerable Interruptions indeed, trifling and vexatious, will often happen to call down our moſt exalted Thoughts, but for that very Reaſon, we have the more Need of returning to them often: and not only taking a tranſient View of them in our

Minds,

Minds, as of Shadows paſſing before a Looking-Glaſs; but trying to fix them there, by reducing them to ſomething ſolid, and every Time drawing ſome practical Precept from them, that may remain in our Hearts, to whatever Trifles Imagination is hurried away, by the various Avocations of Life.

Conſidered as a Part of Space, the Spot, each of us takes up, is indeed very inſignificant: but nothing is ſo as relating to the internal Syſtem of the Univerſe: and therefore properly to fill the Station, there aſſigned us, deſerves an equal Degree of Care in Perſons of every Rank, and is not to be meaſured by the Acres they poſſeſs.

This Sort of Conſideration reſtores a higher Value to the elevated Circumſtances of Life, than the former has robbed them of, in the low Notion of intrinſic Value. This ſhould teach the Miſer, to eſteem his Riches, rather by the Treaſure ſpent, than by his ſecret Hoard: It ſhould teach every Body,

Body, in general, from the Day-Labourer to the King, by every poſſible Means to raiſe themſelves, in the moral World, to a Degree of Conſideration, that their Place in the natural World can never attain.

Could we, (it is a ſtrange wild Fancy) imagine to ourſelves a Map delineated of this, as well as of the other, we ſhould ſee then, that thoſe vaſt Continents which overſpread the one, would be reduced, upon the other, to moderate Bounds: while the ſmalleſt civilized Tracks of Land became extenſive Empires, in Proportion to the Improvements they have made, in religious Virtue and Knowledge. This, after all, is the Map of real Conſequence, and which will remain with indelible Strokes, long after the other, when all that it relates to, is reduced to nothing.

Can any one imagine *Riches* the Soul of Life and Source of Joy? Let him but conſider thoſe vaſt Tracks of Land, where the Boſom of the Earth is filled with glo-

rious

rious Gems, and glows with unnumbered Mines of Gold. Let him conſider theſe Countries, barbarous and wretched, ignorant of almoſt every uſeful Art and ſpeculative Science; untaught both in the Elegance and Uſe of Life: then let him ſee in ſome Character of civilized Generoſity, at Home, what it is, that gives all the Gloſs to Fortune, and whence alone Riches derive their Luſtre.

Is *Power* the Idol of the Soul? Caſt your Eyes on the Monarchs of Mogul, or Emperors of China. See how infinitely their Grandeur, in Immenſity of Wealth, in Extent of Dominion, in the Adoration of their Subjects, exceeds whatever Greatneſs we are dazzled with, in thoſe minute Inſtances, that come within our Sphere of perſonal Knowledge. Then conſider this Greatneſs in itſelf; diveſted of all higher Conſiderations, what is it, but a wonderous Tale, to aſtoniſh Foreigners: the ſhining Subject of a Book of Voyages perhaps, that will be thrown aſide, by the

firſt incredulous Perſon, as a Lye, and read by the Serious and the Thoughtful, with ſuch Reflections, as the Pride of the Monarch would little approve. It muſt be conſidered too as ſubject to hourly Revolutions: beſides, that all the State of an Eaſtern Monarch is incapable of affording the leaſt Reliſh, to one, who has been uſed to the Refinements of Life, in more humanized Nations.

The higheſt Gratitude muſt ſurely be raiſed in us, by ſuch Compariſons as theſe, when we reflect, that thoſe moral and civil Improvements, which ſeem to ſet our little Corner of the Globe, ſo far above the reſt, that, like that Mountain, which the Siameſe imagine to ſtand on thoſe Gems, in the Midſt of the Earth, the Sun and Moon, ſeem to have their Revolutions only round that, cheering and enlightening it with their warmeſt Beams.

Such an extenſive View of human Kind, as this, leads likewiſe to a general Benevolence,

nevolence, dilates and enlarges the Heart, as well as the Imagination. Where we behold a cultivated Spot of Land, the Eye dwells on it with Pleaſure: And when we ſee nothing but wild and barren Deſerts around us, we wiſh, that they could be improved into the ſame ſmiling Scene. We learn to look on the Savage Indian, as our Fellow-Creature, who has a Mind as capable of every exalted Satisfaction, as our's: and therefore we pity him for the Want of thoſe Enjoyments, on which we pride ourſelves. From compaſſionate Thoughts kind Actions naturally flow: our Endeavours will, in ſome Degree, follow our Wiſh, wherever it is ſincere: and would we all join our Endeavours to do all the Good we are able, this Earth would ſoon become a Subject of ſuch delightful Contemplation, as ſhould make us reflect, with infinite Delight, upon the Study, that had firſt led us into ſo uſeful a Train of Thoughts.

ESSAY XV.

IT is very ſtrange, and not leſs grievous, that almoſt all People ſhould have ſuch an Inequality in their Conduct, as in ten thouſand unheeded Inſtances, daily to contradict thoſe fundamental Principles of Duty and Reaſon, which, in Matters of more acknowledged Importance, they juſtly make it their Glory to act up to.

The Perſon who goes contrary to thoſe Principles, upon deliberate Reflection, we all ſhun and deteſt: and is mere Heedleſſneſs ſo great a Virtue, as to atone for our behaving, in the ſame faulty Way, becauſe we do it, without making ſo deep Reflection, as we ought?

A few

A few Inſtances may explain what I mean, and I believe, there are few Perſons, who will not find ſomething of the ſame Sort, at home, within themſelves.

Good Nature is a Quality, that People are as fond of poſſeſſing as any.—Does it ever hold, throughout? That Pain, which we ſhould abhor to inflict on the Body of a Friend, or a Dependent, do we never ſuffer our Caprice or Humour to inflict it on their *Mind*, an infinitely tenderer Part? —That Reſentment and Diſlike, which we are ſtrongly upon our Guard againſt feeling, in Return for real Injuries, and ſhould juſtly reckon ourſelves very bad Chriſtians if we did otherwiſe, do we never make them the Puniſhment of trivial Offences, and ſlight Diſagreeableneſſes, in thoſe to whom, perhaps, we have ſolid Obligations? At the ſame Time that we ſhould deſire, in Caſes of Importance, to do all our Fellow-Creatures all poſſible Good, do we ſeriouſly enough conſider that the repeating an idle Story, or ſpreading upon ſlight

Grounds, a diſagreeable Report, is acting moſt directly contrary to thoſe laudable Deſires? We can *actually* do Good but to few: but we ought to wiſh it as ſincerely and as warmly to all, as if they were truly within the ſmall Circle of our own Influence: and conſequently, a Mind, that is as good as it ſhould be, will feel itſelf heartily intereſted in every Intereſt of our Fellow-Creatures. Should we then liſten with Complacency, or even with careleſs Ears, to the Story of ſuch Faults, Frailties and Follies, as are real Misfortunes to them?

Patience and Reſignation are what, in the ſevereſt Trials, we ſhould earneſtly wiſh to be diſtinguiſhed for. Do we practiſe them on trifling Occaſions? Let every one of us be aſked—Can you bear to be put out of your own Way, to accommodate your Humour to the Varieties of human Life, and however your Day is turned and interrupted, cheerfully make the beſt of it? Can you improve little Inconveniencies into

into ſomething tolerable and even uſeful? It may generally be done if People would but ſet their Minds to it.

You are convinced, perhaps, that a cheerful, grateful Diſpoſition is that, which above all others, ought to be cultivated by Creatures formed for immortal Happineſs, guided in their Way to it, by the moſt gracious Providence, and continually under the Eye, and Care of the moſt excellent and amiable of Beings. But do you always act, and think, and ſpeak conſiſtently with this Perſuaſion? Is none of your Breath waſted in vain Sighs? Do you never voluntarily indulge the Overflowings of a fruitleſs Sorrow? Do you never, by giving Way to a momentary Diſguſt, Reſentment or Peeviſhneſs, rob yourſelf of that higheſt Delight, which flows from perfect Kindneſs and good Humour? Do you never encourage diſagreeable Thoughts and jarring Paſſions to diſorder the Harmony of your Soul, and make you taſteleſs to all the Joys of Life, and to all the

Charms of beautiful Nature? Do you never nouriſh a fond and blameable Anxiety—never heap Times and Circumſtances of Trouble and Sorrow in your Mind, till the Load grows too heavy for Imagination to bear? Do you never pleaſe yourſelf with heightening the Paintings of your Diſtreſs? Do you often recollect all the happy and delightful Circumſtances of your Situation? No State is without very many, and thoſe very important.

Again: you are generous, it may be, free and open-hearted: your Diſpoſitions are all noble and liberal: your Bounty would be inexhauſtible if your Eſtate was ſo: you would do Good to all the World: no Eye ſhould ſee you, that could not "bear Witneſs" to your Kindneſs. But in the free Indulgence of this amiable Temper, how poſſible is it, that you may injure thoſe whom you are the moſt bound to help? If proper Regard to the Limits of your Power be not obſerved, this Dignity and Generoſity muſt be ſupported by the

the cruelest Injustice, and the most wretched Condescensions. To what Straits, what Meannesses are those often reduced, whom Fortune had once placed in a high Rank! From what proceeds this, but from Inequality of Conduct!

The elegant Beauty, whose fondest Aim is to please and to be admired, has sometimes small Regard to that complete Harmony of Manner and Behaviour, which perfects the Charm. Indeed we are, all of us, so short-sighted, that to take in a whole View at once, is impossible. Yet these Views of Life we ought surely to chuse and study, with at least as much Taste and Attention, as a Landscape Painter does Prospects. The most considerable Objects should take up the chief Place, and be finished with the highest Art. The rest should be thrown off, in due Proportion, and lessening by imperceptible Degrees. But what a Picture would he make, were the distant Hills to be painted of a vivid green, and the nearest Objects softened

into a purpliſh blue: here, every Flower touched up with exquiſite Art; and theſe Objects as near, and more conſiderable, ſketched only with rude Out-lines?—— Inconſiſtent throughout, we are ſeriouſly offended at the Diſproportion of any Work of Art, and utterly inſenſible of it in a thouſand Inſtances, where, to the Eye of Reaſon, it is infinitely more monſtrous.

ESSAY

ESSAY XVI.

ONE great Reaſon why People ſucceed ſo little in the Art of pleaſing, while they ſeem wholly poſſeſt by the Ambition of ſhining, is their not obſerving proper Rules of Place and Time. They ſhine, indeed, in their own Eyes extremely: but they do not ſuit their Manners to the Taſte of thoſe, with whom they converſe. Whatever is their favourite and ſuperior Accompliſhment, they are apt to imagine a ſufficient Recommendation, wherever they go: when probably there are a thouſand leſs ſtriking, which properly placed, would make them appear, with infinitely more Advantages. Nor is even the favourite Accompliſhment by this Means loſt; for when once you have condeſcended to win People's Eſteem, in their own Way, they

are willing enough to ſee every additional Grace in your Character, and dwell upon it with Pleaſure.

To inſtance only in the Character of the fine Lady. Struck with the Praiſe of Beauty, and conſcious of ſuch a ſuperior Claim to Admiration, the abſolute fine Lady will be ſuch through every Scene of Life, and in every Variety of Circumſtances. But after all, what Good is it to the induſtrious Tradeſman, that, after many a Morning's Attendance, he can ſee her Ladyſhip with a Pair of fine Eyes? It is not Beauty, Wit, or Learning, that paſs for current Coin, in our Dealings with People who live by their Buſineſs. Punctuality and Exactneſs, with a ſtrict Care to ſave them as much Time and Labour as we poſſibly can, is the leaſt we owe them, for the Pains they voluntarily take to furniſh us with every Convenience of Life.

This is meant for a rambling Sort of Eſſay: and now I have named Punctuality,

I canno

I cannot help digreſſing, to praiſe it. There is nothing that makes us more welcome Members of Society. Exactneſs, even in Trifles, amounts in a long Life, to a conſiderable Sum of Merit. People know how to depend upon us, and are ſure, we ſhall never give them the leaſt Uneaſineſs or Diſappointment if we can poſſibly help it. This makes them the more eaſily bear with us, on Occaſions more important, where Intereſts will ſometimes very innocently interfere: and it is a Piece of true Policy never to forfeit that Credit, in ſmall Things, which we may poſſibly want, in great ones. There are numberleſs little Arts of ingratiating ourſelves, with our Fellow-Creatures, which are equally conſiſtent with Sincerity and Prudence; nor was ever any Thing more wiſe and humane than the Apoſtle's Precept of "becoming all Things to all "Men." Little Diſobligations will be perpetually occurring, if we allow ourſelves any Liberty, in Point of Exactneſs; the even Tenor of our Conduct is broken,

and People begin to think themſelves indebted more to Chance than to us, for any Civility or Kindneſs we may ſhow them.

There is a Kind of ſhatter-witted amiable Character, which gains no Confidence, and loſes all Reſpect. I think, I never ſaw any particular Deſcription of it, and it may not be amiſs to draw one here. It is a careleſs, gay, good humoured Creature, as full of Livelineſs and Entertainment, as void of Caution and Diſcretion, living on from Moment to Moment, without meaning any Harm, or ever taking thorough Pains to do Good. In ſuch Perſons, fifty good Qualities are loſt, in the mere Hurry of Inconſideration. Every Thing goes on at Random: every Thing is unequal and odd, and yet every Body loves them. Their Affairs for the moſt Part run to Ruin without any Extravagance: nay by Starts, they will be the beſt Managers, and the ſtricteſt Oeconomiſts in the World;

but

but alas this is all the while, only Whimſy maſquerading in the Dreſs of a Houſewife.

They who come under this Deſcription, whatever their Principles may be, are guided in all the common Affairs of Life by mere Humour and Frolick. They run, with the prettieſt Harmleſſneſs in the World, into Acts of Injuſtice, that make all around them ſuffer ſeverely, while they themſelves are perfectly inſenſible whence the Miſchief comes, becauſe they are conſcious to their own Hearts of having the beſt Deſigns and Sentiments imaginable. By all I could ever learn, the great and amiable Sir R. S. was one of theſe whimſical, unhappy Mortals. With a Genius and a Heart, that few have ever equalled, he had this Defect in Conduct, to ſuch a Degree as made him, in every Reſpect, but that of an Author, as hurtful a Member of Society as well could be. Wit like his turned his very Diſtreſſes into Entertainment, and it is hard to ſay, whether he raiſed in his Acquaintance, more Love,

Diver-

Diverſion, or Compaſſion. But what Pity it is, that ſuch a Mind ſhould have had any Blemiſh at all!

My Diſpoſition has led me a great Way: but when a favourite Subject is fairly thrown before one, who can reſiſt it? Not Gravity and Decorum itſelf. I remember a Story of a good old Lady, who uſed pretty equally to divide her Time, between the Church and the Quadrille-Table. A young Man of ſome Humour, and of more Smartneſs than Diſcretion, had laid a Wager, that he would make her talk over her Cards in Prayer Time. He contrived, the next Day to kneel down by her; and when the Litany began, whiſpered in a low Voice—I had the terribleſt Luck laſt Night! No Mortal was ever ſo unfortunate.—Huſh: be quiet Sir, pray have done.—Madam, you ſhall but hear me.—Pray Sir, fie, by no Means, pray be gone, for Goodneſs ſake.—I had four Matadores: and ſo on he went telling his Hand, and the whole Proceſs of the Game: while ſhe, poor Woman,

Woman, was very ſeriouſly angry, and, as ſhe thought, perfectly inattentive to him. He goes on however.—A Club was led, I put on a ſmall Trump.—Human Patience could endure no longer. Pooh, ſays the good Lady, you ſhould have played your Ponto.

ESSAY XVII.

THE Stedfaſtneſs of a Rock, the Immoveableneſs of a Center, the Firmneſs of a deep Foundation, a Pillar of Adamant, an everlaſting Anchor, ſuch to the fluctuating Mind of Man is a well-grounded Confidence. Without it, all his Thoughts are lighter than the Leaves in Autumn, the Sport of every momentary Hurricane. His Opinions are changeable by every varying Circumſtance: every Mote in a Sun Beam ſuggeſts ſome new Fancy: he hopes and fears, diſlikes and loves, doubts To-day, truſts To-morrow, accuſes himſelf of Credulity the next, then again grows inadvertent, and never lets his buſy diſquieted Imagination reſt. His Reaſon, one Hour, convinced by weighty Arguments, has no Impreſſion left of them,

another:

another: but, ſuſpecting Judgment to be in Fault, when only Memory is blameable, frankly gives itſelf up to the next contrary Syſtem, and ſo on *ad Infinitum*.

In the Intercourſe of Life, this fatal Diffidence inſenſibly alienates the deareſt Friends, breaks the kind Bonds of mutual Truſt, or diſſolves them, by ſcarce perceptible Inſinuations. It particularly oppreſſes weak Spirits: and challenges all the Knight-Errantry of Reaſon, to free them from the Power of this wicked Enchanter. It is indeed in his inſorcelated Palace, that, like the People in Arioſto, Friends and Lovers, deceived by falſe Appearances of one another, are perpetually wearied in a vain Purſuit, and groan under a thouſand imagined Slights and Injuries, of which all are equally guiltleſs; and never gain an Explanation to rectify the miſerable Error. A Hero, who lately, perhaps, appeared crowned with Laurels, is now, on the ſudden, transformed into a Monſter. Credulous

lous Minds! that do not know that the Laurel of ſome Virtues, is ſo abſolute a Security againſt all groſſer Failings, that their Eyes muſt deceive them whenever they repreſent ſuch a Metamorphoſis.

But Judgments are uſually formed, more from particular Inſtances, than from general Rules: and hence it is, that they are ſo contradictory. Every freſh glaring Appearance is believed, againſt the moſt abſolute Evidence, that paſt Experience can furniſh: and by mere following our Noſes, we miſs the great Land-marks, that ſhould direct our Journey.

But to grow more methodical: This Paper is of too mixed a Nature, to allow the dwelling ſeriouſly on that religious Confidence, which is the Ground of all the reſt, and of every aſſured Satisfaction in Life, or Support at the Cloſe of it. This is the inexhauſtible, eternal Source of Cheerfulneſs, Patience and Courage: of that

that true undaunted Fortitude, that inſpires the real Hero,

Who aſks no Omen, but his Country's Cauſe.

Diſtruſt and Danger vaniſh at its Radiance: Conſtancy and indefatigable Perſeverance crown it with the nobleſt Succeſs, and with immortal Honour. Even the Weakneſs of conſtitutional Cowardice may be relieved by it, from a thouſand anxious Fears: and raiſed, upon any extraordinary Occaſion, into an abſolute Diſregard of all thoſe unreal Evils, which ſo ſwell the ſickly Liſt of Apprehenſion.

In Friendſhip, a mutual Confidence is of ſo abſolute Neceſſity, that it is ſcarcely poſſible it ſhould ſubſiſt, for any Time, without it. When once upon Reaſon, and Experience, we have given Perſons an allowed Title to our Eſteem, it is the higheſt Injury both to them, and to ourſelves, to remove it upon leſs than an entire Certainty: and there are ſome Degrees

of

of Eſteem, that ought to outweigh the very ſtrongeſt Appearances. In ſuch Caſes we ſhould miſdoubt all Judgments of our own, rather than ſuſpect the Fidelity of a tried Friend: and never give it up till we have allowed them the fulleſt Opportunity for vindicating themſelves, if Appearances have injured them. By this Means, nothing will remain perplexed or uneaſy upon the anxious Mind, but every Thing will be fair, and clear, and honeſt.

When Truth is preſuppoſed as the Foundation, this Dependence follows of Courſe, even when the Circumſtances do not admit of a preſent Explanation.—— "Appearances would give me Reaſon to "be uneaſy at your Behaviour, if Friend-"ſhip did not forbid my ſuſpecting you." ——"It is very true: and I cannot yet "explain thoſe Appearances."——What a World of Trouble, and Diſtruſt, would ſuch ſhort Explanations avoid.

There

There are few Things, which have more ſtruck my Imagination, than the meek Anſwer of Balaam's Aſs, when his Maſter unreaſonably corrected him, for what had only the Appearance of a Fault, and was, in Reality, the higheſt Inſtance of Duty and Care. In which, after having received a very paſſionate Return to a very gentle Expoſtulation, ſhe only replies,—" Was " I ever wont to do ſo unto thee ?"

ESSAY

ESSAY XVIII.

THE only unſhaken Baſis of Friendſhip is Religion. True Friendſhip is a Union of Intereſts, Inclinations, Sentiments. Where theſe greatly claſh, there may indeed, be outward Civility, but there can be nothing more.—What then becomes of all thoſe fair Ideas, and many fair Hiſtories too, of generous Friendſhip ſacrificing every Intereſt of its own? What becomes of that worthieſt Complaiſance that bends diſagreeing Humours into perfect Sympathy? What becomes of that powerful Affection, that makes often ſo thorough a Change in the Sentiments and Tempers of Perſons? All theſe may conſiſt with a Maxim appearing ſo contrary: for few People look ſo deep as the real and ſolid Foundation of all, but take thoſe for

for important Intereſts and eſſential Points, which indeed are but a temporary Superſtructure, liable to perpetual Alterations.

Whoever to the Faith and Conſtancy of Friendſhip ſacrifices the Intereſts of Fortune, or the Indulgence of Inclination, purſues ſtill his true and eſſential Intereſts: ſince he is ſtrictly performing an important Duty. However the Opinion of the Good may differ, in a thouſand Things, in this they agree, that there "is one Thing "needful," and that in all leſſer Points, Candour, Complaiſance, and good Nature are the Temper of Mind it requires.

Agreed in this, their Inclinations, their Pleaſures, their Purſuits, in all that is important, muſt be the ſame. What Openneſs of Heart, what Harmony of Sentiments, what Sweetneſs of mutual Converſation muſt be the Conſequence.

Truth, perfectly clear, and undiſguiſed, Conſtancy unchangeable through all the Varieties

Varieties of Humour and Circumſtances, the kindeſt Affection, and the moſt winning Manners flow almoſt naturally from this Source of every good Diſpoſition. This infallible Rule is a ſure Guard againſt all thoſe Errors and Extremes which the beſt Affections are liable to run into. It makes particular Friendſhips keep within ſuch Bounds, as not to interfere with general Charity and univerſal Juſtice. It teaches to diſtinguiſh between thoſe Errors and Frailties of human Nature, which in true Friendſhip muſt be abſolutely paſt over, and thoſe contagious Faults which neceſſarily diſſolve it. It heightens the Delights of happy Friendſhip, while it teaches us to look upon our Friends, as Bleſſings indulged to us, by the All-Giver: and it provides the only Balm, that can heal the Wounds of Friendſhip cut ſhort by Death. It ſoftens every kind Anxiety, we can feel for thoſe we love, and muſt feel frequently in a World ſo full of varied Diſtreſſes; by bidding us look up to the almighty Friend and Father of all, "who

"careth for all alike," and truſt in him, to give them that Aſſiſtance and Relief, of which we, poor helpleſs Creatures, can at beſt be but very poor Inſtruments. To Him we can pour out the affectionate Fulneſs of our Hearts, when overwhelmed with a tender Concern for their Welfare: and may reſt aſſured, that he will guide and proſper our ſincere Endeavours for their real Good.

When the Heart has long been uſed to the delightful Society of beloved Friends, how dreadful is Abſence, and how irkſome, Solitude. But theſe Phantoms of Abſence and Solitude vaniſh before the Sunſhine of Religion. Every Change of Life, every Variety of Place, allotted us by an all-ruling Providence, grows welcome to us; and while we conſider ourſelves and our Friends, however diſtant, as equally under the Care and Protection of the ſame gracious and omnipreſent Being, our common Creator, Redeemer and Preſerver, the Diſtance between us, with all its

Terrors, is annihilated: while Solitude and Retirement gives us but the Opportunity for a wider Range of Thought on Subjects, that ennoble Friendſhip itſelf. Then may our Minds look forward, through an endleſs Succeſſion of Ages, in which the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, renewing in a happier World the affectionate Engagements, juſt begun, as it were, in the Days of their Mortality, ſhall rejoice in one anothers continually improving Happineſs and Goodneſs, to all Eternity. Bleſſed Manſions, where we ſhall meet again, all thoſe beloved Perſons whoſe Remembrance is ſo dear to us! Our Friendſhip ſhall then, probably, be extended through the whole Society of the Bleſt. Every one amiable, every one benevolent, how can it be otherwiſe? The excellent, of all Ages and Nations, ſhall then be numbered among our Friends. Angels themſelves will not diſdain to admit us to their Friendſhip. Beyond all theſe Glories, we may ſtill raiſe our Thoughts to the ſupreme Friend

Friend and Father, till they are loſt in the dazzling, but delightful Contemplation.

When ſo fair a Superſtructure riſes from ſo firm a Baſis, who but would build their Friendſhip on this everlaſting Rock? But alas the ſlight Connections of the trifling World, are but like thoſe wooden Buildings raiſed ſuddenly for pompous Feſtivals, adorned with every Elegance and Splendor for a Day, and with all the Mimickry of marble Pillars, and the moſt ſolid Architecture. The leaſt Accident deſtroys them at once: and a very ſhort Time, of Courſe, ſees the Spot, where they were erected, forlorn and bare.

ESSAY XIX.

I DO not much love the Tribe of dreaming Writers. There is ſomething very unnatural in ſuppoſing ſuch Products of Underſtanding, ſuch a regular Series of Ideas, generally abſtruſe and allegorical enough to put the Comprehenſion of a waking Reader upon the Stretch, to be the Effects of wild Imagination, at thoſe Hours when ſhe is moſt unaſſiſted by Reaſon and Memory. Yet it is pity a lively Fancy ſhould be balked, and confined to the dull Road of Eſſay-writing, merely to avoid ſuch a trifling Abſurdity in the Phraſe. It might certainly be changed with great Propriety into that of a *Reverie*, which, by People that indulge their Imaginations, is often carried on a very conſiderable Time, with as gay a Variety of Circumſtances, and

and as lively Colouring, as the Poppy-dipt Pencil of Morpheus could ever produce. Be it allowed me then to ſay, that one Afternoon this Summer, I fell into a deep *Reverie*, lulled by the Whiſpering of Groves, the ſoft Deſcent of a refreſhing Shower, and the muſical Repetitions of a Thruſh. The Air around me was perfumed with Jeſſamins and Woodbinds, and I found myſelf perfectly in a poetical Situation. The Volume I had in my Hand ſhould of right, to be ſure, have been Ovid or Petrarch, but it was Sunday, and the genteel Reader muſt excuſe me if I own that it contained the Book of Eccleſiaſtes.

The ſoothing Scene about me had at length ſuſpended my Reading; but my Thoughts were ſtill filled with many beautiful Images of the Nothingneſs and Vanity of Human Life. There is ſomething ſo bounded, and ſo ſhadowy in our Exiſtence, that the celeſtial Beam of Underſtanding which ſhows us what it is, muſt

give us almoſt a Diſguſt of Life itſelf, were not our Affections attached to it by ſo many tender Ties, as call back our proud Thoughts every Moment. Moſt miſerable State, continued I, in a melancholy Soliloquy, what Wretchedneſſes are we converſant in, to what mean Objects are we bound down, how little a Way can we ſee round us, how much leſs can we comprehend, through what a Wild of Errors lies the narrow Path of Truth! Narrow and long!—Long? Why then it is not methinks ſo ſtrange, that one ſhould not ſtep to the End of it at once. Well, ſuffice it that our Progreſs be gradual.—But what a thick dark Hedge is here on either Side. How much pleaſanter would it be to break through it, and view the fair Varieties of the Univerſe as we paſs along. Suppoſe it quite away.—In the Midſt of this vaſt trackleſs Plain how will you now diſtinguiſh your Path?—This Brink of a Precipice that you are to paſs along, does not your Head turn at it? Do not you wiſh again for your ſafe Boundary?—Well, but here the

the Path is ſafe and open.—Amuſe yourſelf, look round you.—I do not like my own Path. Yonder is one much fairer, paſſing over a much nobler Eminence. I like my own Path leſs than ever. I do not yet ſee far enough.—O thou Spirit of Diſorder and Confuſion, canſt thou not be contented to move in the Way allotted thee? Deviate then into Ruin. Many a winding Walk preſents itſelf on each Hand. Art thou willing to venture?—— No, let us purſue this ſafer, vulgar Path. Muſt we have Dirt and cloudy Weather too?—You muſt. It belongs to this Portion of the Univerſe. This Rain that diſpleaſes you here, is nouriſhing ſweet Herbs and delicious Fruits, that will refreſh you a few Furlongs hence. Behold now the Advantage of theſe deſpicable Things you are hedged in with. Theſe Thorns that ſometimes pull you back, are often crowned with gay and fragrant Bloſſoms, to make the tedious Journey ſeem leſs irkſome. Thoſe thick Trees, that bar your wandering View, are dreſt in a ſoft

Verdure that relieves your Eye, and enables it ſometimes to take a better Glimpſe through the Branches, on Objects that it could not dwell upon, till it becomes ſtronger.—Beneath a Cypreſs lay a gloomy Philoſopher, who called out in a diſmal Tone, whoever you are, fooliſh Paſſengers, know your own Miſery. It is impoſſible to have any rational Enjoyment, in this your deſpicable State. Baniſh the Thought of Comfort. You are a Parcel of Wretches, to be happy is none of your Buſineſs, to be cheerful is an Abſurdity. Theſe Bloſſoms are tranſient as the Spring, thoſe vile Fruits you gather as you paſs along, ought not to detain your Attention one Moment, from thoſe Gems that glitter on your Heads, which are your only real Treaſure. Thoſe wretched Fruits what are they?—They are what ſupport us from one Stage to another ſaid a plain Man, who paſt by, and our Stock of Gems is gradually increaſing, if we keep but ſteadily in the right Path, and gently and patiently remove the Thorns and Briars, that moleſt

us,

us, as we move towards the Country of Diamonds.—Immediately my *Reverie* tranſported me into a Fair. Long Streets of Booths croſſing each other at right Angles formed very regular Squares, of which ſome were handſome and ſome very ugly, from the different Structures of the Booths. Several Market-Women were carrying away Bundles and Baſkets marked with the Names of the various Proprietors. I met a Hag of a very untoward Look, bent almoſt double with the Weight of Years, her Brow wrinkled, and her Complexion Weather-beaten. The Sight of her diſpleaſed me, but ſhe was not to be avoided. Here, ſaid ſhe, offering me a filthy Baſket, covered at the Top with Thorns, take your Purchaſe, and make much of it. My Purchaſe, ſaid I, ſtepping back: Nay, ſaid ſhe, e'en take it, and flung it at my Head. But as ſhe turned away, a Smile that began to brighten on her ſolemn Face, diſcovered to me that ſhe was the good Fairy *Experience*. I ſat down with the Encouragement this

Diſcovery gave me, and began to examine her Baſket. The Thorns it was covered with coſt me a good deal of Time to diſentangle, and take them out with Safety to my Fingers, but I recollected them diſtinctly every one to be ſuch as had perplexed me and torn my Clothes, as I paſt along the narrow Path, and which one by one I had gently broken off the Boughs while I purſued my Journey. Theſe were the very individual Thorns and Briars, and while I was wondering how they ſhould come to be ſo collected, I came to the Bottom, where I found a Row of ineſtimable Pearls, equal in Number to the Briars, large, even, round, and of an exquiſite Poliſh. Beſide them lay a Scrip of Paper with theſe Words written on it.

"Philoſophy and Evenneſs of Temper
"are Pearls, which we purchaſe at the
"Price of thoſe Vexations and Croſſes in
"Life, that occur to us every Day. No-
"thing in this World is to be had for no-
"thing. Every Difficulty we ſurmount

"is

" is the Purchaſe of ſome Advantage. Go " through the Fair, and ſee."

I perceived a good Genius ſtanding near me, and deſired him to be my Cicerone. We went through the Booths and examined the Purchaſes. Here the Coin paid down for Health and Eaſe, and Freedom from Perplexity, was ſtamped with Care and Prudence. There, the Copper Money of mere plodding Perſeverance was the Price of Wealth, Honour, Learning and Accompliſhments. In one Place there was a Sort of Monmouth-Street, where People were bartering old bad Habits for new ones, every Way more becoming, but ſeemed to think their Bargains very hard, and the very Article of fitting them on, occaſioned ſuch a Variety of wry Faces, as would have given great Diverſion to a Groteſque Painter. It was a melancholy Amuſement to ſee how People miſtook in the Value they ſet upon Things, how often they paſſed by, with a ſlighting Air, thoſe Goods which at firſt they might have had

for a Trifle, and never knew the Worth of them, till they were engaged to other Bidders, or the Price raiſed very high, or themſelves perhaps gone ſo far off before they took the Fancy of returning, that they could not find their Way back without a Guide; and in the whole Place there was but one Guide to be met with, and ſhe of ſo forbidding an Aſpect, and ſo diſagreeable a Converſation, as made her a very undeſirable Companion. She ſeverely reproved their Folly, and obliged them to throw away the Bargains, on which they had moſt ſet their Heart, and then led them back to the Fair, by a rough, round about Way, to buy thoſe they had formerly ſlighted. By the Time they had got there, ſhe began to wear a gentler Aſpect, and they found ſo much Advantage in the Change of their Purchaſes, that notwithſtanding all her rude Treatment, they acknowledged *Repentance* as a very uſeful Friend.

Leiſure,

Leiſure, I found, was a Metal that proved more or leſs valuable according to the Image ſtamped upon it, and as I ſaw what admirable Curioſities it purchaſed in the Hands of good Managers, I was quite provoked to ſee what Quantities of it were flung away: but this was nothing. I ſaw many fine People throw away Handfuls of Diamonds, that they might have their Fingers at Liberty to catch Butterflies.

In ſome Parts of the Fair, every Body ſeemed to be playing at croſs Purpoſes. The moſt valuable Gems were ſquandered away for Trifles, which yet they could not purchaſe, and Trifles offered for Jewels of the higheſt Price. I ſaw my Friend Foſco, the Antiquarian, among a Multitude of the ſame Claſs, who brought ſuch a Quantity of Time and Induſtry, as would have purchaſed any Thing in the whole Place, and poured it out before a Cabinet of Copper Coins, which, ſtill after all, wanted one or two of being perfect. I ſaw others of gayer Appearance buy a Shadow, a Flower, a Fea-

a Feather, at ſtill a higher Price.—At laſt, to my infinite Vexation, a leſs ſhadowy Figure ſtood before me, and a Summons to attend ſome Viſitors that were juſt alighted, put an End to my *Reverie*.

ESSAY

ESSAY XX.

THERE is a Magnificence in Nature, like that of ſome ſumptuous Feaſt. The Objects of our Enjoyment are multiplied infinitely beyond our Capacities of enjoying: and there is ſomething, in the human Mind, perpetually diſſatisfied with its preſent Advantages, becauſe it cannot take in every Thing, at once. Like ſilly Children, poſſeſſed of all within our Reach, we cry for all we ſee.

The Deſires of our Nature ſo vaſt, and its Capacities ſo bounded, are Demonſtrations of a Being in its Infancy here, and to be perfected hereafter. But having traced this uneaſy Sentiment, this perpetual Craving to its natural Source, we ſhould from thence learn to ſuſpend its Force, during

our

our preſent State; and when once we know at what Sort of Enjoyments we can arrive, and how vainly we ſtrive to go further, ſit down contented with our Lot, and try to make the beſt of it. Were this done, as it ſhould be, Spleen would loſe half its Empire in the World. We ſhould not be much mortified at finding ourſelves tied down for a while, to ſuch childiſh Amuſements, becauſe we ſhould conſider, that our Exiſtence has a nobler Aim, a higher End in View. In the mean Time, till that can be attained, we ſhall welcome every ſmall Satisfaction, with a cheerful Countenance, and never be too proud to be pleaſed.

I cannot help looking upon *Pleaſure* as a real, and amiable Being, and bleſſing the Author of Nature, who has created this Charmer to lead Man on towards final Happineſs through, as Sheakſpear calls it, this Worky-day World. The ſoft Enchantreſs waves her Wand, and all Nature appears dreſt in Smiles and Elegance. Sweet Smells,

Smells, gay Colours, muſical Notes, are diffuſed through the whole Globe. Every Thing is beautiful in its Seaſon. All we have to do, is to open our Minds to ſo rich a Variety of delightful Impreſſions: to accommodate ourſelves with Joy and Thankfulneſs to the preſent Scene, whatever it is, and to make the moſt of that Good, which every Thing has in it. To a free Mind all is agreeable: but violent Attachments to any particular Objects narrow the Soul, and leſſen its Capacity for Enjoyment.

The firſt Care to be taken is, to keep our Minds ſo looſe and diſengaged from the World, that ſetting, as far as poſſible, the true Value upon every Thing in it, and no more, we may enjoy all the Satisfaction it can poſſibly afford us, and avoid thoſe Anxieties, which miſplaced Affections create. Violent Partialities, muſt have violent Antipathies to balance them: Thoſe who ſet up to themſelves Idols to worſhip, will, at the ſame Time raiſe to themſelves

Hob-goblins, to fear. We can ſeldom find in our Hearts to exalt one Character, without depreſſing another: and we muſt generally have an Object of Ridicule and Diſlike, as well as one of Eſteem, and Admiration. Nay I am afraid, there are more People, who amuſe themſelves with ſeeing every Thing in a burleſque and diſagreeable Light, than of ſuch, as will take the Pains to be pleaſed with an amiable View of this fair World. We are moſt ingenious to find out what is wanting or amiſs in our Situations: but how ready to overlook the other Side! What Complaints of the ſcorching Heat of Summer, the pinching Cold of Winter! For ſome People, no Day is good enough, no Place without its Faults, no Company without its Failings. Alas, alas! as if it were any Thing new or unexpected, that this World ſhould be, in many Things deficient: as if it were a Proof of Genius to diſcover, what it is a much better Proof of good Senſe to paſs over, and as if it needed quick Eyes to diſcern the Flaws in this rough

rough Caſt of a Globe. Who could ever expect it to be all made of ſolid Pearl, and poliſhed to the higheſt Luſtre? Yet ſuch as it is, if we make the beſt of it, we ſhall enjoy no ſmall Degree of Happineſs.

There is in every Thing, a Charm, a Good, that we have Capacities to taſte, if we would uſe them. The enthuſiaſtic Language of Poetry alone, is fitted to deſcribe the Bloom of Nature, in a Country Scene. One Breath of vernal Air diffuſes Serenity and Joy, through the Soul. The Muſic of the Woods, tunes every Thought to Harmony. The clear Height of the Firmament, and the bright Blueneſs of the Æther, is Tranſport to the Eye, and Gladneſs to the Heart. While the Sight wanders through the gay Expanſe, the Mind riſes to the nobleſt Contemplations, and our Thoughts expatiate upon future Scenes of fair Exiſtence, in Worlds all of Harmony and Beauty.

But,

But, to give us a juſt View of our Capacities for Pleaſure, and ſure this is a Rent-roll well worth looking over, we may conſider what Joy almoſt every Kind of Object affords to ſome Set of Men or other, and reſolve out of Duty and Prudence to draw ſome Degree of that Satisfaction from them, which theſe do from Inclination, or acquired Partiality: at leaſt not to overlook, with Contempt, or regard with Averſion, whatever is not contrary to Innocence or Reaſon. See but how delighted the Floriſt and Botaniſt are with thoſe Bloſſoms and Herbs, which the reſt of Mankind tread careleſsly under Foot. Obſerve the Aſtronomer, with what Tranſport he views thoſe clear Stars, which the Mortal of Buſineſs, or the Butterfly of Amuſement, ſcarce ever find Leiſure to look up to. Mind the Painter, who ſees all Things in a pictureſque View, how charmed he is with the blended Lights and Shades, in every Landſcape. Nothing eſcapes him; each Figure has an Attitude, an Air, ſomething graceful or groteſque:

and

and ſo far is not ridiculous. Every Kind of Virtuoſo has his darling Attention, and each one is the Source of ſome Pleaſure, unknown to the reſt of the World. Why may not we ſhare in them all? What a Veneration has the Antiquary for Duſt and Mould? How pleaſed is the Collector of Rarities, with Moths and Shells, nay, with what many of us ſhould look upon as the Refuſe and Deformities of Nature. Theſe good People as much as they deſpiſe one another, have, all of them, Reaſon on their Side, as far as it will carry them. But when attached to one particular Thing, we indulge our Fondneſs to an Extravagance, then Ridicule comes in, with a juſt Reproof. But this belongs only to the Degree, to the immoderate Fondneſs; for in ſome Meaſure, every Thing deſerves a pleaſed Attention. The Flower, the Butterfly, the Shell has exquiſite Beauty: the Herb, invaluable Uſe. Every Species of Learning is an Improvement to human Nature: and thoſe, of which the Uſe is not obvious, may tend, perhaps, to important

tant Diſcoveries yet unthought of. Antiquity is truly venerable, its Simplicity amiable, its Annals inſtructive. Modern Refinements have their Merit. The moſt trifling Gaieties of ſocial Life exhilerate the Heart, and poliſh the Manners. One might as fairly number the Sands on the Sea Shore, as reckon up the Multitude of Things, that may afford a wiſe and reaſonable Pleaſure. Were our Lives here ſtretched out, to ſome thouſands of Years, we might ſtill be learning or enjoying ſomething new. Yet this Conſideration does not make long Life at all deſirable, ſince our Advantages in another State will be ſuperior to all, that our beſt Improvements can help us to acquire in this.

ESSAY XXI.

HOW vain, and how vexàtious is the Flutter of the World! Even I, who am ſufficiently ſenſible, perhaps too much ſo, to its Pleaſures and Amuſements, can find, after a little while, my Spirits quite worn out by them, and learn from a frequent Experience, that Reflection of the moſt ſerious Sort, is the only true and laſting Source of Cheerfulneſs.

As moſt of our Affections here take their deepeſt Tinge from the Workings of Imagination, ſo there are perhaps ſcarce any, that will maintain their terrifying Shapes againſt the calm Efforts of Reaſon: but, when amidſt the Hurry of a mixed and varied Scene, we give them only now and

and then a tranſitory Glance, theſe airy Phantoms caſt a Gloom and Horror over our whole Lives. It is then, that Poverty and Pain, and Sickneſs, Diſgrace and Diſappointment, nay Satiety itſelf, ſtrike upon our unguarded Fancies, in the moſt dreadful Manner. Our Hearts are filled with Sorrow, and poured out in ungrateful Complainings. Cool Reflection alone can diſdain theſe Bugbears of the Mind: and to one who comprehends, ſo far as our bounded Underſtandings can comprehend, the univerſal Scheme of Providence, few of its particular Diſpenſations will appear ſevere, while every preſent Suffering is overbalanced by a glorious Futurity.

How naturally the Contemplation of what is moſt melancholy, leads to the moſt enlivening Hopes, may be ſeen in ſome Verſes, which I will inſert here, and which flowed from a natural Chain of Thoughts from the trifling, but gloomy Incident of a Bell tolling at Midnight.

Hark! with what ſolemn Toll the Midnight Bell
Summons Reflection to her duſky Cell:
With leaden Sound it dully ſtrikes the Ear,
Bids Horror wake, and careleſs Fancy hear;
Chill'd Fancy hears with awful Gloom oppreſt
Thus by the deep-felt, wordleſs Voice addreſt.

Wake Mortal! Wake from Pleaſure's golden Dream,
The preſent gay Purſuit, the future Scheme;
The vain Regret of Hours for ever paſt,
The vain Delight in Joys not made to laſt:
The vainer prying into future Days,
Since, ere To-morrow's Sun exerts its Rays,
My Toll may ſpeak them vain to thee. Thy Fears,
Thy Hopes, thy Wiſhes vain, and vain thy Tears.
What then to Thee, whoſe folded Limbs ſhall reſt
In the dark Boſom of the ſabled Cheſt,
What will it then import to Thee, if Fame,
With flatt'ring Accents, dwells upon thy Name,
Or ſpurns thy Duſt, or if, thy mould'ring Form
Safe from Life's dang'rous Calm, or dreadful Storm,
Sleeps in the Concave of a well-turn'd Tomb
By Marble Cupids mourn'd, amid the Gloom
Of ſome old Abbey venerably rude
In Gothic Pride: or in ſome Solitude

Beneath the ſpreading Hawthorn's flow'ry Shade,
Crown'd with freſh Graſs and waving Fern is laid:
Trod, in ſome public Path, by frequent Feet
Of paſſing Swains, or deck'd by Vi'lets ſweet;
Nameleſs, unheeded, till a future Day
Shall animate to Bliſs the lifeleſs Clay.

Or whether gaily paſt thy feſtive Hours,
Bath'd in rich Oils, and crown'd with blooming Flow'rs;
Or pinch'd with Want, and pin'd with waſting Care,
All Joys, all Griefs, alike forgotten there.
The Part well acted gracious Heav'n aſſign'd,
If of the King, the Warrior or the Hind,
It matters not: or whether deck'd the Scene,
With Pomp and Show, or humble, poor and mean.
The Colouring of Life's Picture fades away,
When to theſe Shades ſucceeds a clearer Day.
The Colouring partial Fortune blindly gave,
Debas'd the imperial Figure to a Slave.
In glitt'ring Robes, bade ſhapeleſs Monſters glow
And in a Crown conceal'd the ſervile Brow.
Perhaps falſe Lights on well drawn Figures thrown,
Scarce cautious Virtue would her Image own:
But when the Gloſs of Titles, Wealth and Pow'r,
Of Youth's ſhort Charm, and Beauty's fading Flow'r,

Be-

Before Truth's dazzling Sun ſhall fade away,
And the bare Out-Lines dare the piercing Ray,
Then if the Pencil of thy Life has trac'd
A noble Form, with full Proportion grac'd,
A Model of that Image, Heav'n impreſt
In the firſt Thoughts of thy untainted Breaſt,
Whate'er the Painting Fortune's Hand beſtow'd,
Whether in Crimſon Folds thy Garments flow'd,
Or Rags ungraceful o'er thy Limbs were thrown,
Thy ev'ry Virtue overlook'd, unknown;
An Eye all-judging, an all-pow'rful Hand
The bounteous Pallet ſhall at length command,
Reject the vicious Shape that ſhrinks away
Stript of thoſe Robes, that dreſt it once ſo gay.
Excuſe the imperfect Form, if well deſign'd,
Where the weak Stroke betray'd the enlighten'd Mind;
Grant ev'ry Ornament and ev'ry Aid
On ev'ry Failing caſt the proper Shade,
And bid each ſmiling Virtue ſtand diſplay'd;
Improving ev'ry Part, with Skill divine
Till the fair Piece in full Perfection ſhine.

ESSAY XXII.

WHY is it that almoſt all Employments are ſo unſatisfactory, and that when one hath paſt a Day of common Life, in the beſt Way one can, it ſeems, upon Reflection, to be ſo mere a Blank? And what is the Concluſion to be drawn from ſo mortifying an Obſervation? Certainly not any Concluſion in Favour of Idleneſs: for Employment, as ſuch, is a very valuable Thing. Let us have done ever ſo little, yet if we have done our beſt, we have the Merit of having been employed, and this moral Merit is the only Thing of Importance in human Life.

To complain of the Inſignificancy of our Employments, is but another Name for repining at that Providence, which has appointed,

appointed, to each of us, our Station: Let us but fill that well, to the utmoſt of our Power, and whatever it be, we ſhall find it to have Duties and Advantages enough.

But whence then, is this conſtant Diſſatisfaction of the human Mind; this Reſtleſſneſs, this perpetual Aim at ſomething higher and better, than, in the preſent State, it ever can attain? Whence, but from its celeſtial Birth, its immortal Nature, framed for the nobleſt Purſuits and Attainments, and in due Time, to be reſtored to all this Dignity of Being, if it does but behave properly in its preſent Humiliation.

Be that as it will, there is ſomething painful in this ſtrong Senſe of Worthleſſneſs and Meanneſs, that muſt make People of Leiſure and Reflection paſs many an uneaſy Hour. Perhaps there is nothing better fitted to wean us from Life: but in doing that, it by no Means ought to hinder us from Induſtry and Contentment.

Every Station, every Profeſſion, every Trade has its proper Set of Employments, of which it is an indiſpenſable Duty for every Perſon to inform themſelves with Care, and to execute with Patience, Perſeverance and Diligence. This Rule of Duty holds, from the Emperor to the Artiſan: for though the Employments are different, the Duty, that enforces them, is the ſame, in all. Man is born to labour: it is the Condition of his Being; and the greateſt cannot exempt themſelves from it, without a Crime.

If we conſider well, we ſhall find, that all Employments, in this tranſient Scene, come pretty much to the ſame Nothingneſs.—The Labours of thoſe who were buſy and buſtling on this Globe, five or ſix hundred Years ago—what now remains of them, but the Merit, to the Perſons themſelves, of having been well employed. How many valuable Books, the Employment, and the worthy one, of whole Lives, have periſhed long ago, with the very

Name

Name of their Authors! The ſtrongeſt Monuments of human Art and Induſtry, Obeliſks, Temples, Pyramids are mouldered into Duſt, and the brittle Monuments of Female Diligence in Pye-Cruſt, are not more totally loſt to the World. To found an Empire was enough to gain a Sort of Immortality: yet the Empires themſelves have proved mortal.

There are certainly ſome Employments of a noble, and a happy Kind, but, in no Degree, anſwerable to our Ideas: for the beſt we can do, is moſt poor, whether we would improve ourſelves, or do Good to our Fellow-Creatures, in Compariſon of the Capacity of our Mind, in its original State; which reſembles ſome vaſt Roman Amphitheatre, that once contained Myriads of happy People within its ample Round: defaced and ruined it can now ſcarcely afford Shelter, from the ſudden Storm, to a few ſilly Shepherds.

ESSAY XXIII.

IT is too common, for Perſons, who are perfectly convinced of the Duty of Patience and cheerful Reſignation, under great and ſevere Trials, in which the Hand of Providence is plainly ſeen, to let themſelves grow fretful and plaintive under little Vexations, and ſlight Diſappointments: as if their Submiſſion in one Caſe, gave them a Right to rebel in another. As if there was ſomething meritorious in the greater Sufferings, that gave them a Claim to full Indulgence in every trifling Wiſh of their Heart: and accordingly they will ſet their Hearts moſt violently upon little Reliefs and Amuſements, and complain and pity themſelves grievouſly, if they are at any Time denied.

All

All this is building on a falſe Foundation. The ſame gracious Providence, that ſends *real* Afflictions only for our Good, will, we may be abſolutely ſure, afford us ſuch Supports and Reliefs under them, as are needful and fit: but it will not accommodate itſelf to our idle Humour.

To be happy, we muſt depend for our Happineſs on Him alone, who is able to give it. We muſt not lean on human Props of any Kind: though when granted us, we may thankfully accept and make Uſe of them; but always with Caution not to lay ſo much Weight upon them, as that the Reed broken under our Hand, may go into it, and pierce it.

On the Loſs of a Friend, we muſt not ſay, *this* and *that* Perſon, *this* and *that* Amuſement ſhall be my Relief and Support. But—to Providence I muſt ſubmit—Providence will ſupport me in what Way it ſees proper.—The Means on which I muſt depend, under *that*, are a careful

and cheerful Performance of, and an Aquiescence in whatever is my Duty. I must accommodate myself to all its Appointments: and be they Health or Languor, a dull, or an active and gay Life; a Society agreeable to my Fancy, or one that is not, or none at all; if, I do but endeavour to keep up this right Disposition, and behave accordingly, nothing *ought* to make me melancholy, or unhappy, nothing *can*, nothing *shall*. Forward *beyond* this Life, in this Case, I not only *may*, but *ought* to look, with Joy and Hope, with Cheerfulness and Alacrity of Spirit. Forward *in* this Life, it is not only *painful*, but *faulty* to look either with Anxiety, or with self-flattering Schemes. Yet *on* this present Scene, from Day to Day, and *forward* so far as is necessary to the Duty of Prudence, I may look with a Smile of Content and Gratitude: for every Day has something, has innumerable Things, good and cheerful in it, if I know but how to make the best of it.

In

In a Change of Situation, think not like a Child, of the Toys you leave, and the Toys you ſhall find, to make you Amends for them. All Play-things are brittle. Think not, like a grazing Animal, that you have changed one Paſture for another: and ſhall graze on this, or that Herb here, with Delight: "The Herb withereth, the "Flower fadeth" every where. But think, like a reaſonable Creature.—This Change was appointed for me: Acquieſcence is my Duty: Duty muſt be my Support. Yet I know, ſuch is the Condeſcendence of infinite Goodneſs, that I ſhall have many a ſlighter Relief, and Agreeableneſs thrown in: but theſe are by the by: not to be reckoned on before-hand, nor to be grieved for, if they fail or intermit.

ESSAY XXIV.

WHAT are my Ideas of Happineſs? Negative ones preſent themſelves firſt. A Freedom from Guilt—from Self-diſlike—from Fear—from Vexation—from Languor—from Pain—from Sorrow.

The Joy of early Youth and early Morning, that is, Vigour and Capacity for continual Improvement, and a long Space before one to exert them in, with a Variety of new and noble Objects.—But, alas, how am I fitted for this, who have acquired ſuch ſtrong Habits of loitering Indolence—loſt all Power of Application.

Therefore Application, a *Habit* of it ought to be re-acquired, though the Objects

jects of it *here*, are looked upon with the Indifference, they ſo highly deſerve.

The Approbation and Protection and Guidance of the Good, Wiſe, Amiable, and Great——How much have I undeſervedly experienced of that, even here! But mixed with a Painfulneſs, and Degree of Suſpicion, from feeling that *I* am nothing, and have no Claim to it: and that the beſt of *Them* are but a Degree above nothing: are fallible, and may be deceived, in me, or miſlead me: are mortal, and muſt forſake me, and leave me.—But look higher, and there is a Power, that can make us what it will, and Goodneſs that wills our Happineſs; and Wiſdom, that can fully fit us for it: and Majeſty and Amiableneſs—no Expreſſion can reach the Ideas, that fill the Soul, in this Contemplation and Hope. Total Solitude in the Enjoyment of Thoughts like theſe, ſeems, to me, high Happineſs.—But the corruptible Body would ſoon preſs down the Mind: the exhauſted Spirits would ſink into Wretch-

Wretchedneſs, and there would be a Self-reproach for the Neglect of ſocial Duties. There will be Duration enough, for all hereafter, and Strength for every various Exertion. There are ſome poor Pleaſures here, which are only ſuch, becauſe the mortal Frame requires them, as it does Food, and Sleep. Theſe are what one calls Relaxations, Amuſements, Trifles, that unbend the Mind, and vary its Ideas agreeably. The Sight of gay Flowers or ſunny Landſcapes; the Song of Birds; the Sportings of innocent Imagination, in ſome trifling Book; the Gaieties of young Animals. I am very thankful for theſe, in their Seaſon, but paſt the Moment when they are neceſſary, the Landſcape ſoon fades, if ſeen by ones ſelf alone: and the Book gives quite another kind of Delight, if read in a Society, that are equally pleaſed. The Amuſement of Animals, is from ſeeing them happy, and all this tends to promote right Diſpoſitions, as the Contemplation of beautiful Objects, and

ſweet

ſweet Sounds raiſes the Mind to grateful Adoration.

The mortal Pleaſure I can the leaſt know how to lay out of my Ideas, is the ſweet Forgetfulneſs of quiet and refreſhing Sleep: a great Bleſſing *here*, but only *here* where there are Cares, and Fears and Follies to be forgot. But if not indulged beyond needful Refreſhment, it ought, ſurely, while we are here, to be accepted with humble Thankfulneſs.

The Joys of Society are, of all others moſt mixed with Pain. Yet where all are perfect, and where all are happy, how ſublime muſt they be! Alas my great, my continual Failure is in ſocial Duties! Why? Becauſe I am almoſt continually in Society. In Solitude, one has nothing to do, but to cheriſh good and pleaſing Diſpoſitions. In Society, at every unguarded Moment, bad and painful ones break out, and fill one with Shame, Remorſe, and Vexation. Selfiſhneſs ſhows its ugly Head: little

little Contradictions excite Vehemence of Temper, to put out its Claws: Talkativeneſs prates away the ineſtimable Hours, without Uſe or Pleaſure. Even good Humour, and Eaſineſs of Temper muſt be reſtrained and mortified, elſe they lead to criminal Negligence, and deſtructive Extravagance. The juſteſt Affections muſt be regulated, elſe they tie down the Heart too much. On the contrary, Juſtice and Gratitude demand often, that our kindeſt Affections ſhould be excited and expreſt, where natural Temper and Inclination do not prompt them. We ought with the ſtricteſt Eye of Juſtice to diſtinguiſh Right and Wrong in Characters, and yet with the tendereſt Charity to overlook, and compaſſionate ten thouſand leſſer Faults, and Diſagreeableneſſes.

In ſhort, the Life of Society is the Life of conſtant, unremitting, Mortification, and Self-denial. It is this, that makes the only uſeful Hardſhip of the Cloiſter, not the Faſtings, Hair-Cloths, Watchings, and Diſ-

Diſciplines. But it is really ſtill harder in uncloiſtered Society. To keep the Mind in right Frame, amid ten thouſand Interruptions: to be regular, and diligent, without the Poſſibility of any ſettled Plan: To ſpread Cheerfulneſs when one is not pleaſed: to ſupport it in ones ſelf, when others are dejected—and a ſad Look, or a ſad Word, from thoſe I love ſinks my Heart: as a good Word, and a Smile raiſes it inſtantaneouſly.

But far, far better than the cloiſtered Rules of Man's fooliſh and arbitrary Invention, the Life of Society, with all its Self-denials, is the Appointment of the Almighty. Every Individual, of human Society, is ennobled, and endeared by its Relation to Him. For the meaneſt of theſe, Chriſt died. Our Love to each other, to every one of each other, is the Proof required of our being his Diſciples.

Selfiſhneſs therefore muſt be continually overcome, except where ſome real Harm, or great

great Pain may be avoided by very ſlight Inconvenience: and then it ſhould not be cunningly contrived, but openly requeſted: and if granted, accepted as a Favour, or the Refuſal cheerfully acquieſced in.

But, in other Reſpects, how can we do Good? Follow as God's Providence leads, each in his Station, within his Bounds, and within his Capacity. Above all keep up Cheerfulneſs and good Humour. An Air of Diſſatisfaction is doubly faulty. It belies your eternal Hopes, and diſheartens all around you.—But Converſation is ſo empty, ſo uſeleſs.—Keep it peaceable and innocent, at leaſt. Reſtrain Talkativeneſs in yourſelf, that you may think a little, how to introduce ſomewhat uſeful: but do not ſtrive too much. Mere good Humour is *very* uſeful: it tunes the Mind. Do, in every Thing, the beſt you can: and truſt in better Merits, that it ſhall be accepted. Look forward to the Converſation of Angels, and perfected Spirits: of thoſe whom you have loved, and who have loved

loved you amidſt all your mutual Imperfections here. *There* will be nothing but Joy, and eternal Improvement. All joined in executing the divine Will, and dwelling on its Praiſes. No more Fear of Sorrow, or Parting: no more Doubts and Jealouſies of yourſelf: no Anxieties for them: all fixed and ſecure. Of paſt Sorrows and Frailties will remain only the everlaſting Gratitude of thoſe who have been relieved, and forgiven. Each to other, in their due Degrees: all ſupremely, to their God, and Saviour!

ESSAY XXV.

THIS is a Day I have Cauſe to bleſs. Let no gloomy Thought come near it. But can I keep out of my Mind, the Thought of ſuch a Friend, as I ſo lately had? with a whole Train of Ideas attending that Thought? No; undoubtedly: but let me think of that Friend, and regulate thoſe Ideas, as I ought. Let me, with humble, joyful Gratitude, conſider, in how many excellent Beings I have the Intereſt of an affectionate and beloved Friend. Glories of the World! I look down upon you: My Happineſs, my Boaſt are of a higher Kind.

Theſe Friends are, at preſent, far ſeparated from one another, but all happy: and, in a bleſſed Hereafter, I am permit-

ted

ted humbly but joyfully to hope, that we ſhall all be eternally re-united. What mutual Gratulations, what tender Recollections muſt attend that Re-union! And oh, what unſpeakable Gratitude and Adoration to Him, through whoſe bleſſed Redemption, that Bliſs ſhall be attained, and this Mortal put on Immortality! The frail human Heart can hardly bear the Tranſport of the Thought! This Idea is too vaſt, and too bright.—Yet, it is not a fairy Viſion, but a ſtedfaſt, eternal Truth.

Far away, then, all melancholy Apprehenſions of Death, of Pain, of Parting, mere Shadows every one! For what is Pain? An Hour of Trial, the Proof of our Faith, Patience and Fortitude.—What is Death? The Entrance upon our Reward, the End of our Dangers and Perplexities, the Point to which we have been tending from our Birth.—What is Parting? More bitter in itſelf than Death, becauſe it leaves us deſtitute of our deareſt Supports, in a State wherein we ſeem to need them

them moſt. This then, as the ſevereſt Pain, is the nobleſt Trial. And are we not ſure that we are in the Hands of a merciful God, whoſe every Attribute is engaged to lay no more upon us, than our own Faith, and our own ſincere Endeavours concurring, He will enable us to bear, to triumph over?

We are born, into this World, poor helpleſs Creatures: but Parents, Friends, Protectors are provided to conduct us up to Maturity. An all-gracious Providence works by what Variety of Inſtruments it ſees fit: but fit Inſtruments it never wants, and never can want. The Seeds of Good, and Evil grow up with us: at leaſt, the Enemy ſows his Tares ſo early, that they ſoon overtake the Grain. To root out the one, and to cheriſh the other, is the Buſineſs of Life. What is it, to us, by what Means, or by what Change of Hands, the Maſter of the Harveſt vouchſafes to do this? ſince our great Concern is only, that it be effectually done, and then, we are well

well assured, that He "will gather the "Wheat, into his Garner."

He, who has given the former Rain in its Season, will not deny the latter Rain, also, to the diligent and pious Husbandman. Where a merciful Providence has remarkably blest the earlier Part of Life, the well-disposed Heart need not fear, that the later Years of it shall be left destitute. Every fit Support, and Guidance shall be provided: nay every Comfort and Delight, that contradicts not some still kinder Intention, or more important Aim.

Sufferings belong to human Nature. Of these, some Persons have a larger, some a lighter Share, and this indiscriminately, in some Measure, to Bad and Good. This Appointment is for wise Reasons, some of which, even our poor shallow Understandings can trace. But the Good are assured that they shall never want any necessary Support, under their Sufferings: and to know that they are liable to them, is one

appointed

appointed Trial of their Faith, of their Submiſſion. A true Chriſtian knows, that all theſe Things ſhall finally work together for his good. Why then ſhould he dread any of them?

But when theſe Sufferings are actually preſent, how muſt they be ſupported?—Cheerfully. To thoſe who know, that all is, on the whole, well, every paſſing Day brings its Amuſement and Relief: and let theſe be thankfully accepted. Thoſe who are removed out of this World are happy: they are removed in God's good Time. Thoſe, who are continued in it muſt rejoice in every Comfort, that attends their Continuance: muſt be thankful for every added Year. For, is not Life a Bleſſing? May not this added Time be improved to moſt excellent Purpoſes? Let this then be our Endeavour.

While continued in human Society, let us preſerve a ſociable, a friendly Spirit. Let our joyful affectionate Remembrance attend

attend thoſe, who are removed already into a higher Claſs of Beings. But let our active Love be exerted towards all our Fellow-Travellers: and let it be our Aim, ſo far as we are enabled, to lead many along with us towards thoſe happy Manſions. This, at preſent, it ſeems, is the only Work we are fit for: and is it not a bleſſed one?

"Be glad O ye Righteous, and rejoice "in the Lord, for a good and pleaſant Thing it is to be thankful!"

ESSAY XXVI.

AMUSEMENT is uſeful and laudable, not when it draws the Mind from religious Subjects (in this View the World uſes it and is deſtroyed by it) but, when it takes the Thoughts from ſuch Sorrows as are merely temporal, and imaginary, and ſo refits them for that better Employment, which, without this harmleſs Medium, they could not ſo ſoon or ſo well have reſumed. The idle Mind flies Improvement as its Enemy, and ſeeks Amuſement as its End. The Chriſtian Heart has but one Home, one Joy, one Purſuit. But from this Home it is too often detained: from this Joy it is too often ſhut out: in this Purſuit it is, too often, hindered, by the Frailty of human Nature, the neceſſary Attentions and Engagements of Life,

Life, the Attachments of Affinity, and Friendſhip.

On this Side Eternity, Cares and Sorrows will be felt, in ſome Degree, by the Beſt: but the Chriſtian, who knows that it is his abſolute Duty to rejoice, and give Thanks, in every Thing, indulges not thoſe gloomy Hours, nor wilfully harbours one melancholy Thought. Yet ſtriving with ſuch Thoughts, is only to be worſe entangled in them. At ſuch Times the good and humble Mind, accepts thankfully the Aſſiſtance of the verieſt Trifle, the moſt common and unintereſting Object, or Employment, that can diſſipate the preſent Chain of vain and tireſome Thought: and this Chain once broken, it flies with recruited Vigour to its true Home, "as a "Bird out of the Snare."

By common and unintereſting Objects, I mean only to exclude all Indulgences of Fancy and Imagination, and ſuch Amuſements as ſeem intereſting, becauſe they

indeed ſooth the Diſpoſition, which we ſuppoſe ourſelves flying from, as, for Example, melancholy Muſic, and poetically ſolemn Scenes. But, in a higher View, the leaſt Flower of the Field, is a more intereſting Object than the proudeſt Palace. For what Object can be ſmall, or unintereſting, that is the Work and Gift of the Almighty! This Flower, or Inſect, or Shell, would Aſpaſia ſay, is given to me, at this Inſtant, by ever preſent, ever watchful Goodneſs, to call off my Thoughts from their preſent vain Anxiety, or ſinful Regret, to the thankful Contemplation of a gracious Creator, and Redeemer.—This Employment, this Company, that calls my preſent Attention from Subjects, it could wiſh to purſue, though it purſues them to its Hurt: this dull and unedifying Company, this dry and trifling Employment, is, in the Order of Providence, a kind Remedy, to unbend my Mind, and thereby reſtore its Strength. As ſuch I will thankfully accept it, and cheerfully turn myſelf to it: for if I am abſent in

Company,

Company, I had better be alone; my Soul is equally waſting its Strength, in earneſt Thought, and melancholy Recollection, and my Appearance diſcredits the Cauſe of Religion.

Theſe are the Reaſons, that make it a Duty to open the Mind to every innocent Pleaſure: to the Admiration of every rural Object, to harmleſs Pleaſantry and Mirth, to ſuch a general Acquaintance with Arts and Sciences, Trades and Manufactures, Books and Men, as ſhall enable us to attend to, and to be amuſed, in ſome Degree, with every Scene, and with every Converſation. There is juſt the ſame Pride in reſolving, that our Minds ſhall be always employed on the Stretch, as in imagining that our Reaſon is a competent Judge of all Subjects: human Frailty and Imperfection, alike forbids both. The Iſraelites gathered their Manna, from Day to Day: ſo ſhould we our temporal Pleaſures, and Comforts, and truſt Him to provide for To-morrow,

To-morrow, who ſupplied us Yeſterday. When through Eagerneſs, and Fondneſs of Mind, we hoard up, by anxious Schemes and Wiſhes, a Portion for ourſelves, it breeds but Corruption. Only in the Ark can it be laid up ſafe.

END of the FIRST VOLUME

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